

The Development of Teacher Identity in Counselor Education Doctoral Students

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my wife, Sloan Allen. You are the strongest person I know and are a source of constant inspiration. You are a blessing of indescribable worth to me and our children. This is as much yours as it is mine, if not more so. I am never not amazed by you.

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Abstract

Moving forward, the field of counseling needs to continue to be concerned about strengthening its identity (Kaplan et al., 2014). Part of this process concerns the training of competent and effective professional counselors. It is important that consideration be given to how the individuals preparing these counselors are trained. Counselor education doctoral students, as part of their training to become counselor educators, are prepared to work as counselors, scholars, leaders, supervisors, and teachers. While we have a firm understanding of how these students develop in general (Limberg et al., 2014; Moss et al., 2014), there is little known about how they develop specifically as teachers. The goal of this research study was to gain insight into how teacher identity develops for counselor education doctoral students. Transcendental phenomenology helped to gain insight into the experiences of 10 participants who were interviewed related to the development of their identities as teachers. Three primary themes emerged from the data and were described as (1) Connection, (2) Confidence, or lack thereof, and (3) Who am I, who are you? The findings will help counselor education programs structure the training of their doctoral students so that they will be better able to be supported as counselors, teachers, and individuals.

Keywords: professional identity development, counselor education, doctoral student, teaching, phenomenology

Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction	1
CACREP Standards.....	1
Professional Identity Development	3
Counselor Education Doctoral Students	4
Statement of the Problem	6
Purpose of the Study	7
Significance of the Study	8
Definition of Terms.....	8
Organization of the Study	9
Chapter 2: Review of the Literature.....	10
Professional Identity Development.....	10
What is a Counselor?.....	10
What is Professional Development?	12
CACREP Standards and Professional Identity Development	14
Subsets of Professional Identity Development in Counselor Education.....	16
<i>Counselor Educators</i>	16
<i>Counselors-in-Training and Professional Counselors</i>	22
<i>Doctoral Students</i>	28
Leader.	31
Researcher.....	33
Counselor.	37
Supervisor.	40
Teacher.....	43
Theoretical Frame	49
Experiential Learning Theory	49
<i>Concrete Experience</i>	51
<i>Reflective Observation</i>	52
<i>Abstract Conceptualization</i>	53
<i>Active Experimentation</i>	53
Summary	54

Chapter 3: Methodology	55
Qualitative Research Design.....	55
Ontology.....	56
Epistemology.....	57
Phenomenology	58
<i>Historical and Philosophical Tenets</i>	58
Positionality of the Researcher.....	61
Method	64
Participant Recruitment Procedure.....	65
Participants	66
Description of Participants.....	66
Summary of Participants.....	77
Data Collection Methods.....	78
Data Analysis and Procedures.....	80
<i>Coding</i>	81
Establishing Credibility and Trustworthiness	84
Summary	85
Chapter 4: Findings.....	86
Description of Themes: Developing an Identity as a Teacher	86
Theme 1: Connection	86
<i>Inner world</i>	89
<i>Support</i>	92
<i>Validation</i>	95
<i>Feedback</i>	96
Theme 2: Confidence, or Lack Thereof	98
<i>I'm an Imposter</i>	99
<i>I'm Responsible</i>	102
<i>I'm a Counselor</i>	103
<i>I'm a Supervisor</i>	105
Theme 3: Who am I, Who are you?	107
<i>Loneliness</i>	109
<i>Togetherness</i>	110

Summary	112
Chapter 5: Discussion	114
Discussion of Primary Themes	114
Connection	117
Confidence, or Lack Thereof	119
Who am I, Who are You?.....	121
Limitations	124
Implications.....	125
Counselor Education Doctoral Students	126
Counselor Educators	128
Recommendations for Future Research	131
Conclusion	134
References	136
Appendices.....	154
Appendix A: Call for Participants	154
Appendix B: Informed Consent	155
Appendix C: Interview Guide	159
Appendix D: Sample of Initial Codes	161
Vita.....	163

Chapter 1: Introduction

There is no greater responsibility for a counselor educator than the dutiful preparation of future generations of counselors. This work is often done directly through the training of master's level counselors. It is also accomplished circuitously through the training of counselor education doctoral students (CEDS) who are transitioning from practitioners with master's degrees to doctoral-level counselor educators (CEs). These doctoral students will eventually graduate and take responsibility for training counselors themselves. In order to do this effectively, CEDS need adequate preparation in five specific areas: counseling, research, leadership and advocacy, supervision, and teaching, as determined by the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP). Although each of these areas is important, the most recent set of Standards published by CACREP highlight the need for increased attention to teacher preparation in counselor education doctoral programs. The requirements have important implications for CEs and CEDS related to their development as professionals. A better understanding of how CEDS develop their identities as teachers will benefit the field by allowing doctoral programs to better structure experiences and opportunities for budding teachers.

CACREP Standards

The significance of the CACREP 2016 Standards is best understood in contrast to the previous set of Standards published in 2009. Regarding teacher preparation for CEDS, the 2009 Standards *required* that CEDS:

- understand the major roles, responsibilities, and activities of counselor educators (IV.C.1)
- know instructional theory and methods relevant to counselor education (IV.C.2), and

- understand ethical, legal, and multicultural issues associated with counselor preparation training (IV.C.3).

In addition, the 2009 Standards *advised* that CEDS:

- develop collaborative relationships with program faculty in teaching, supervision, research, professional writing, and service to the profession and the public (II.B.2)

These standards did well to establish a foundation for the preparation of teachers but were ultimately general and vague leaving CEDS feeling underprepared to enter the field as teachers (Hall & Hulse, 2010).

The 2016 Standards addressed these concerns by modifying existing standards and adding a number of new standards specific to teaching experiences for CEDS. As a whole, nine standards require CEDS to learn about (6.B.3.a-i):

- roles and responsibilities related to educating counselors
- pedagogy and teaching methods relevant to counselor education
- models of adult development and learning
- instructional and curriculum design, delivery, and evaluation methods relevant to counselor education
- effective approaches for online instruction
- screening, remediation, and gatekeeping functions relevant to teaching
- assessment of learning
- ethical and culturally relevant strategies used in counselor preparation, and
- the role of mentoring in counselor education

The addition of standards related to the assessment of learning, formal pedagogical training, online education, and other areas relevant to teacher preparation expanded learning expectations

of CEDS. Even with these extra standards, counselor education doctoral programs still have autonomy regarding *how* these standards should be met. This lack of guidance has created a large spectrum of experiences related to how CEDS develop as teachers. Although some programs may give more attention to development of their students as teachers, the lack of structure inherent in CACREP's requirements for teacher preparation have left some doctoral students still feeling unprepared or underprepared to work as teachers (Suddeath, 2018; Waalkes et al., 2018). Moreover, it is unlikely that any set of nine standards would serve as a comprehensive enough framework to dictate the learning of over 150 teaching competencies suggested for new counselor educators (Swank & Houseknecht, 2019). Moving forward, it may be in the best interest of leaders in the field of counseling to continue considering how to attend to both the curricular needs of CEDS and the need for structure supporting the development of competencies in teaching.

Professional Identity Development

The field of counseling is shifting as it responds to the implementation of a consensus definition of counseling and the goals outlined in the *20/20 Vision* (Kaplan et al., 2014). As this development continues, it will aid members of the public in being able to accurately answer the question, "what is a counselor?" while providing clarity for other mental health service providers and third-party payers. Simultaneously, individual practitioners, be they practicing counselors, counselor educators, or counseling students, are in the process of their own professional identity development. Many models of professional identity development for counseling professionals have suggested that this process exists on a spectrum and is never truly "finished" (Dollarhide et al., 2013; Gibson et al., 2015; Moss et al., 2017; Woo et al., 2017). In other words, counselors are in a constant state of becoming and do not ascend to the professional rank of "school

counselor” or “mental health counselor” after a certain number of direct contact hours or experiences with continuing education. More accurately, they continue through a process of professional development over the course of their entire counseling careers.

In addition to existing on a spectrum, identity development is not limited to only one professional identity. Much to the contrary, many counseling professionals are in the process of developing a multitude of professional identities that range from advocate to leader to researcher. The complexity of this process is compounded by the fact that one’s professional identity development is largely moderated by other professional identities that are currently held. For example, the professional identity of “researcher” is experienced much differently by master’s level counseling students (Jorgensen & Duncan, 2015a; 2015b) and counselor education doctoral students (Lamar & Helm, 2017). In both instances, the professional identity of “researcher” is a salient part of the individual’s larger professional identity development, but the master’s level counseling student may understand the identity as *consumer of* while the CEDS may understand the identity as *producer of* research.

Counselor Education Doctoral Students

This difference in how professional identities manifest is particularly important in the case of CEDS who are tasked with navigating the development of a myriad of professional identities which include professional counselor, doctoral student, leader, researcher, supervisor, and teacher (CACREP, 2015). Each of these unique professional identities develop independently and with respect to the individual attention they are given. In other words, CEDS who spend more time teaching and being mentored as teachers are likely going to feel more secure in their identities as teachers (Baltrinic et al., 2016; Waalkes et al., 2018). As CEDS navigate the simultaneous development of each of their unique professional identities, they can

often struggle with issues related to role-confusion, imposter syndrome, and feelings of low self-efficacy regarding the development of one or more professional identities (Dollarhide et al., 2013; Limberg et al., 2013). Lack of support through this development may even cause a student to decide to leave their program. Rigler et al. (2017) drew attention to this issue with their report that 50-70% of doctoral students failed to complete their degrees. Doctoral students who left counselor education programs cited lack of faculty support and interaction as one of the main causes that led to their withdrawal (Burkholder, 2012). In contrast, when CEDS are given strong support and mentorship by their faculty, they are better able to progress in their own professional identity development (Dollarhide et al., 2013; Woo et al., 2017).

The professional development of CEDS should be a primary concern for doctoral programs and counselor educators. The current cohorts of CEDS will be the ones that see to the completion of the *20/20 Vision* (Kaplan et al., 2014). They will be the leaders, supervisors, researchers, and teachers of the future generations of practicing counselors. Strategies to support their professional identity development are numerous and worthy of serious consideration. This process might begin by measuring how this development takes place over a period of time using an instrument like the Professional Identity Scale in Counseling (Woo & Henfield, 2015). An instrument such as this could help counselor educators better assess how their students are progressing in their professional identities and how they might be able to offer more support. That support might take the form of mentoring relationship between faculty and doctoral students or increased attention towards discussion and reflection on professional identity development, both of which are helpful for CEDS navigating their own professional development (Dollarhide et al., 2013; Limberg et al., 2013; Woo et al., 2017).

Statement of the Problem

Scholars working in counselor education have made significant contributions to our knowledge of identity development related to doctoral students (Dickens et al., 2016; Dollarhide et al., 2013, Limberg et al., 2013). This information, though valuable, is far from complete. Recently, researchers have begun to investigate separate dimensions of doctoral student identity development as researchers (Lamar & Helm, 2017; Lambie & Vaccaro, 2011); supervisors (Nelson et al., 2006); and leaders (Meaney-Walen et al., 2013). Although some researchers have explored teacher identity development of doctoral students (Waalkes et al., 2018), more is needed to better understand the complex nature of identity development for CEDS.

Recent research has laid a solid foundation for this investigation by revealing important aspects of teacher development within the field. Hall and Hulse (2010) demonstrated that doctoral students were able to increase their feelings of preparedness related to teaching through successive teaching experiences. Other studies have demonstrated the benefit of mentorship and direct feedback to a student's teaching ability (Baltrinic et al., 2018; Hunt & Gilmore, 2011). In a recent article, researchers made note of these findings but also added that participants felt their doctoral-level training related to teaching was insufficient and lacked intentionality in design (Waalkes et al., 2018). Each of these findings highlights important aspects of the development of counselors as teachers and reveal gaps in our understanding of the intricacies of identity development.

Although there is clear evidence that teaching is the role in which university faculty members, including counselor educators, spend the majority of their time (Davis et al., 2006; Ziker, 2014), professional and scholarly attention to development of this role has been slow to emerge. The CACREP 2009 Standards simply required a "learning experience" in "instructional

theory and methods relevant to counselor education” and introduced requirements to assess doctoral student learning regarding teaching ability (CACREP, 2009). The 2016 Standards significantly bolstered requirements for teacher preparation in doctoral programs using nine standards specifically related to teaching (CACREP, 2015). Under these new standards, new counselor educators should be prepared with an understanding of how to approach online education, how to effectively assess learning in a classroom, how to apply a pedagogical framework to a course, and other key competencies in teaching. Given CACREP’s increased attention to teaching as part of the counselor education curriculum, it is important to begin asking questions about the development of teacher identity within the context of counselor educator identity development so that we can better prepare teachers within the field.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to better understand the experiences of doctoral students in CACREP accredited counselor education programs relative to the development of their identity as a teacher. This phenomenological inquiry will focus on the development of teacher identity as a key component of the counselor educator identity developmental process. This study will add to the research on identity development by highlighting unique factors that contribute to the growth of CEDS as teachers. The results of this study will help researchers better understand the process of teacher identity development for doctoral students in counselor education programs and inform them to better prepare future counselor educators. The specific research questions guiding this study are:

1. What are the lived experiences of doctoral students in counselor education programs related to the development of their identity as a teacher?
2. How do those experiences affect the development of their identities as teachers?

Significance of the Study

This study will contribute to the literature by providing a deeper understanding of the process of teacher identity development for doctoral students enrolled in counselor education programs. With this information, counselor education faculty will be able to more intentionally cater to the needs of their students related to their development as teachers, something that has historically been lacking in counselor education programs (Waalkes et al., 2018). Further, this study serves as the next steps in the evolution of research related to identity development in counselor education. This study opens new pathways of research to investigate the intricacies of intersectionality within different areas of professional identity development for counseling professionals.

Definition of Terms

The following terms are used frequently throughout this study and are defined here for the sake of clarity and reference.

Professional Identity Development: Professional identity development is a process of identity formation that includes personal and professional values and often includes a number of different professional identities (Caza & Creary, 2016). In the field of counseling, professional identity development is often considered from the perspective of the field as a whole (Kaplan & Gladding, 2011; Kaplan et al., 2014) as well as from the perspectives of individual practitioners (Woo et al., 2017). Within this study, both perspectives are considered and are differentiated by context. For example, in the beginning of the second chapter, I provide a review on the nature of professional identity development for the field as a whole. This is applicable for all members of the counseling profession regardless of what specific professional roles they may hold (e.g., school counselor, counselor educator, licensed professional counselor). Later in the second

chapter, I review of the professional identity development of specific counseling professionals. While the broader perspective of professional identity development still applies, the term is now more focused on an individual within a specific profession.

Unique Professional Identity: For the purposes of this study, the term unique professional identity applies to one or more of the professional identities of leader, researcher, counselor, supervisor, or educator for CEDS. CEDS are required to gain competence in each of these areas (CACREP, 2015) and develop professional identities that are highly interconnected but ultimately unique from each other and from the identities of counselor education doctoral student and counselor educator.

Organization of the Study

This dissertation will be comprised of five chapters. The first chapter introduces the study as a whole and the relevant literature. The second chapter provides a detailed review of the literature related to professional identity development in counseling including its history, current trends, and applicable models for a variety of counseling professionals. In addition, Chapter Two reviews the unique professional identities of leader, researcher, counselor, supervisor, and teacher for CEDS. The third chapter details proposed methods that will be used in this study. The fourth chapter will comprise of the analysis of data, and the fifth chapter will consist of discussion, implications, and limitations.

Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

In this chapter, I begin by reviewing professional identity as discussed in the counseling literature. This includes relevant commentary on the importance of a uniform professional identity for the field of counseling as well as a historical review of how that identity has progressed over time. Next, I continue with an examination of the CACREP's 2016 *Standards* and their impact on the professional identity development of counselors and counselor educators. This section will include a review of studies that pertain to identity development for counseling students, new counselors, CEDS, and counselor educators. In addition, this section will review literature related to the professional development of the distinct identities of counselor, researcher, supervisor, leader, and educator. This chapter concludes with a summary of the literature and a brief discussion on the implications and importance of the recognition of distinct professional identities for the field of counseling.

Professional Identity Development

In this section, I will discuss the development of professional identity within the field of counseling. This will include a review of how professional identity for counselors has developed overtime as well as where this process stands currently. Implications for the field of counseling will be addressed throughout.

What is a Counselor?

Being one of the newest professional stakeholders in the expanding realms of mental health providers, the field of counseling stands to benefit from continued discussion on the nature of its unique identity as a profession. Further clarifying the intricacies of our professional identity as well as the unique scope of the practice of counseling as compared to other fields like social work, psychology, and psychiatry will help to distinguish the services of counselors and

reduce confusion among the public (Kaplan et al., 2014; Kaplan & Gladding, 2011; Woo et al., 2014). This goal is central to the field of counseling and is widely supported among the counseling specialties (Kaplan et al., 2014). In their article, *A Vision for the Future of Counseling: The 20/20 Principles for Unifying and Strengthening the Profession*, Kaplan and Gladding (2011) described the process whereby a number of delegates from 30 different counseling organizations came together to decide how to advance the field of counseling. The delegates proposed a total of 22 different items that were grouped into seven distinct principles: (1) Strengthening identity, (2) Presenting ourselves as one profession, (3) Improving public perception/recognition and advocating for professional issues, (4) Creating licensure portability, (5) Expanding and promoting the research base of professional counseling, (6) Focusing on students and prospective students, and (7) Promoting client welfare and advocacy. These seven principles were sent to each of the 30 represented organizations for endorsements and ratified by 29, with the American School Counseling Association (ASCA) choosing to abstain. This landmark achievement marked a significant victory for the field of counseling in the efforts of its members to advocate for the future of the profession and ensure its competitiveness among the other helping professions.

This work continued when delegates recognized the first of the 22 items, “The counseling profession should develop a paradigm that identifies the core commonalities of the profession” (Kaplan & Gladding, 2011, p. 371) as critical to the success of the first three principles (Kaplan et al., 2014). This led to the next step in the *20/20 Vision* and the subsequent publication of *20/20: A Vision for the Future of Counseling: The New Consensus Definition of Counseling* (Kaplan et al., 2014). In this report, the authors described the processes used by the delegates to answer the question, “What is counseling?” Using a two-round Delphi process, delegates from

31 distinct counseling organizations created, and then voted on, definitions for the work of counseling. After final adjustments, consensus was reached with counseling being as, "...a professional relationship that empowers diverse individuals, families, and groups to accomplish mental health, wellness, education, and career goals" (Kaplan et al., 2014, p. 92). As previously, each of the 31 counseling organizations was given the definition and asked to officially endorse its use. All but two agreed, with ASCA and Counselors for Social Justice choosing to abstain. Both the prioritization of actions and creation of a unified definition of counseling were notable achievements that have implications for the field of counseling.

What is Professional Development?

Of these implications, the potential impact on the professional development of counselors and counselor educators is significant. Woo, et al. (2014) summarized our understanding professional development and noted that the formation of a consensus definition of counseling highlighted that the field lacks a similar definition for professional development within counseling. To this end, the authors systematically reviewed the literature and drew a number of significant conclusions related to professional identity for counseling professionals. First, the authors recognized that professional identity is broad in scope and has been investigated both generally (Trede et al., 2012; Woo & Henfield, 2015; Woo et al., 2017; Woo et al., 2016) and with specific populations such as counselors-in-training and new counselors (Gibson et al., 2010; Gibson et al., 2012; Luke & Goodrich, 2010), CEDS (Dollarhide et al., 2013; Henfield et al., 2013; Limberg et al., 2013), and counselor educators (Calley & Hawley, 2008; Gibson et al., 2015; Magnuson, 2002; Magnuson et al., 2009). The popularity of this topic and breadth of its investigation reflects its emerging emphasis as a subject critical to the continued development of the counseling profession. This is also reflected in the most recent iteration of the CACREP

Standards that place a clear emphasis on the development of professional identity for counselors in training and CEDS (CACREP, 2015; Calley & Hawley, 2008). Professional identity, as a concept, is widely present in the literature and salient to the ongoing discussion of how to continue developing the field of counseling.

Woo, et al. (2014) further commented on the numerous efforts made to operationalize professional identity within counseling. Citing a wealth of research that dates back over 20 years (e.g., Brott & Myers, 1999; Healey & Hays, 2011; Moore-Pruitt, 1995; Weinrach et al., 2001), the authors conclude that while a single definition has yet to be accepted by the field as a standard, research related to professional identity in counseling contains a number of related elements such as: (1) knowledge of the profession, (2) philosophy of the profession, (3) expertise of members and understanding of members' professional roles, (4) attitudes towards the profession and oneself, (5) behaviors expected of members of the profession, and (6) interactions with other professionals in the field. Each of these elements of professional identity are recognized as both distinct and measurable. This is important in light of the most recent requirements to document student learning outcomes related to the development of professional identity development (CACREP, 2015). Furthermore, the fact that currently there is no universal agreement among CACREP-accredited counseling programs about which of these elements to measure or how to measure them stands as a challenge in the face of progression of the fields' understanding of professional identity development (Woo et al., 2014).

In summary, the field of counseling has made tremendous strides with the adoption of a set of goals (Kaplan & Gladding, 2011) and a unified definition of counseling (Kaplan et al., 2014). Research on counselors and their development is thriving and aligned with the current zeitgeist of the field (Woo et al., 2014). Among the literature on counselor professional identity

development exists a host of common elements with no single definition or concept having yet been selected as applicable across the entire field of counseling (Emerson, 2010; Puglia, 2008; Woo et al., 2014). Having reviewed the topic of professional identity on a broad scale, in the following sections, I will briefly review the most recent CACREP *Standards* (2016) and discuss their implications on professional identity development for counselors and counselor educators. Next, I will summarize what is known about professional identity development among different professional levels (i.e., masters, doctoral, and counselor educator) and finally what is known related to distinct professional identities with counseling.

CACREP Standards and Professional Identity Development

A number of the most recent *Standards* (CACREP, 2015) have implications for professional development in counselor education. The evolution of these *Standards* from 2009 to 2016 sheds light on the growing importance placed on the inclusion of education related to professional development in counselor education curriculum. For example, the CACREP 2009 *Standards* state, “The CACREP Standards are written to ensure that students develop a professional counselor identity and master knowledge and skills to practice effectively” (p.1). In contrast, the 2016 *Standards* state, “The 2016 CACREP Standards were also written with the intent to promote a unified counseling profession. Requirements are meant to ensure that students graduate with a strong professional counselor identity and with opportunities for specialization in one or more areas” (CACREP, p. 4). The change is subtle, but the wording reflects an increased emphasis on unity within the counseling profession. The updated *Standards* openly encourage a “counselor first” mindset that places professional counselor identity development before that of school counselor, mental health counselor, or other counseling specialty.

Following this direction, CACREP chose to change the wording describing school counselor identity development from the *2009 Standards* to the *2016 Standards*. Standard A.3 in the School Counseling portion of Section III states, “Knows roles, functions, settings, and professional identity of the school counselor in relation to the roles of other professional and support personnel in the school” (CACREP, 2009, p. 46.). This is in contrast with the most recent *Standards* that omit the words *professional identity* in favor of more generic references to school counselors’ “roles and responsibilities” (CACREP, 2015, p. 33).

Another notable change resides in the Doctoral Standards for Counselor Education and Supervision. The *2009 Standards* list the five core areas of CEDS curriculum (i.e., teaching, supervision, counseling, research, and leadership) under Section IV: Doctoral Learning Outcomes (CACREP, 2009). This positioning highlighted the emerging emphasis on student learning outcomes (SLOs) and the requirement for programs to assess SLOs in individual courses and throughout entire curriculums (Barrio Minton & Gibson, 2012). In contrast, the *2016 Standards* list these core areas under Subsection B: Doctoral Professional Identity. This shift in language is indicative of the continually growing importance of professional identity in the field of counseling and the intentionality with which CACREP feels it should be attended to within counselor education curriculum.

The evolution of the CACREP *Standards* continues to highlight the important role of professional identity development to the progression of the field of counseling. In a similar fashion, the *20/20 Vision* placed professional identity development at the forefront of the profession with the creation of shared goals and a single, consensus definition of counseling (Kaplan & Gladding, 2011; Kaplan et al., 2014). As the field continues to grow, further exploration of the professional identity development of different types of counseling

professionals will only help to further solidify our identity as helping professionals and our path moving forward.

Subsets of Professional Identity Development in Counselor Education

In the following section, I will discuss the literature founded on the process of professional identity development for counselor educators, master's level counselors-in-training and new counselors, and CEDS. Next, I will continue by discussing the professional identity development of CEDS generally and also the development of their identities of leader, researcher/scholar, counselor, supervisor, and teacher. Implications will be discussed throughout, and the section will be concluded with a brief commentary on the need for additional investigation into the distinct professional identities of CEDS.

Counselor Educators

Professional identity development for counselor educators is a process that is dynamic, longitudinal in nature, and often defined by challenges (Magnuson et al., 2009; Woo et al., 2017). During the course of their professional development, counselor educators must overcome obstacles that are both personal and professional (Gibson et al., 2015). They are tasked with understanding the complex social and political landscapes of their departments, colleges, and universities with little to no preparation in this regard during their doctoral programs (Magnuson, 2002). Additionally, as counselor educators become more secure in their professional identities and progress through the beginning and mid-point of their careers, they can become frustrated with the nature of their work, their work environment, or the field as a whole (Magnuson, 2002; Magnuson et al., 2009).

Experiences during doctoral training and the first few years employed as a counselor educator are critical to the process of professional identity development for counselor educators

(Gibson et al., 2015). In her groundbreaking articles, Magnuson (2002) drew attention to the experiences of first year assistant professors in counselor education by surveying 38 newly graduated counselor educators (77.5% of all new graduated counselor educators in that year). The results of her research, though broad in scope, offered important implications for the beginnings of our understanding of professional identity development for counselor educators. Using a survey based approach, the author polled a group of new assistant professors ($n=38$) of counselor education that included 26 women and 12 men at two different points during their first year. Qualitative and quantitative data were collected using an instrument designed by the researcher that assessed for participants' levels of stress, anxiety, satisfaction, perception of connectedness, and the factors that influenced these.

Despite the fact that the quantitative data failed to report any statistically significant relationships between measures of satisfaction, stress and anxiety, and feelings of connectedness between the mid-point and end of the year, Magnuson's (2002) qualitative data revealed the true nature of the experiences of her participants. During their interviews, the participants spoke to themes such as the difficulty of time management and problems navigating complex political and bureaucratic systems within universities. Participants also highlighted more positive themes such as the value of mentorship and the importance of working conditions to the success of a new counselor educator. These results were supported by other findings that make note of the importance of mentorship, doctoral preparation, and a sense of belongingness to the professional development of counselor educators (Borders et al., 2011; Calley & Hawley, 2008; Gibson et al., 2015; Milsom & Moran, 2015; Woo et al., 2016).

These themes were expounded on in an update published by Magnuson, et al. (2009) that detailed the experiences of the same cohort of new counselor educators after their first six years

in academia. The authors used a primarily qualitative, phenomenological approach and were able to secure the participation of 22 of the original 43 participants. This new group included eight men and 14 women. Each of the participants had pursued some form of professional advancement with eight having achieved tenure and promotion, 12 who had applied, and two who had applied and been denied.

The results of this study have implications across the fields of professional counseling, especially regarding the professional identity development of counselor educators. The authors note that across all responses, one of the most consistent themes was the relationship between departmental support of new faculty members and their success in the tenure and promotion process, with the inverse also being true (Magnuson et al., 2009). Faculty mentorship is a critical part of the identity development process and can help new faculty members better navigate the tenure and promotion process and secure more highly coveted presentations and publications (Briggs & Pehrsson, 2008). Similarly, structured mentorship in research might help counselor educators who feel disconnected from scholarship establish a firmer research identity by aligning them with a particular approach to research (e.g., qualitative, quantitative, mixed-methods) (Reisetter et al., 2004). Magnuson and colleagues (2009) expanded on this point. They stated that their results, "...underscore the importance of preparing for and engaging in scholarship during doctoral preparation" (p. 68). Indeed, the intentional nurturing of CEDS' fledgling researcher identities is necessary if they are to develop as counselor educators and scholars alike (Dollarhide et al., 2013; Lamar & Helm, 2017; Lambie & Vaccaro, 2011).

Another foundational piece of the literature related to professional identity development for counselor educators is the grounded theory study conducted by Gibson, et al. (2015). In this study, the researchers systematically interviewed 18 tenured and tenure-track counselor

educators with varying levels of professional experiences and academic rank with the goal of developing a model of professional identity development for counselor educators. Their findings reflect the complex nature of professional identity development and are represented by a three-stage model that progresses through the stages of External Validation, Experience and Validation, and Self-Validation. Each stage of the model is defined by the source of the individual's professional validation. In addition, the authors propose three themes or sets of transformational tasks that represent how the counselor educator is able to mature within each stage, these being evolving role of relationships in supporting identity, perceived autonomy in the role of counselor educator, and responsibility in the profession of counselor education.

In stage one of the model, counselor educators base much of their professional identity development on external validation received from others, specifically mentors, dissertation chairs, and peers (Gibson et al., 2015). At this point in their development, counselor educators often struggle to balance the demands of promotion and tenure with the other responsibilities of their position, wracked with self-doubt about their worth as an academic, and working off a definition of the field that is more narrow in scope than their more advanced peers (Davis et al., 2006; Gibson et al., 2015; Hill, 2004; Magnuson, 2002; Magnuson et al., 2009). These factors, in conjunction with the ever-present threat of imposter syndrome that so often plagues new and experienced academics alike (Hutchins & Rainbolt, 2017), create a stage of professional identity development that can be largely uncomfortable and occasionally unbearable enough to cause an individual to question their career choice altogether (Gibson et al., 2015; Magnuson, 2002).

In stage two, counselor educators have progressed in their professional identity to the point where they are able to rely less on the opinions of previous faculty for validation and begin to look more towards their current peers, new mentors, and their successes in teaching,

supervision, research, writing, and counseling (Gibson et al., 2015). Moreover, participants commented that they were able to somewhat specialize in a particular professional activity (e.g., teaching, supervision, counseling, etc.) by writing textbooks, book chapters, or engaging in research related to one of their distinct professional identities. This idea makes sense in light of findings by Wester and colleagues (2019) that suggest that self-efficacy in research significantly influences scholarly activity and publications in counselor education assistant professors. For example, counselor educators who have developed a strong researcher identity are going to be more inclined to specialize towards that distinct professional identity, thus increasing their self-efficacy in that area as they become more and more successful, which in turn encourages them to specialize more and repeat the cycle. In this way, counselor educators learn to rely on feedback from peers, mentors, editors, and other professionals separated from their doctoral program and incorporate that feedback to progress towards the final stage of the Gibson et al.'s (2015) model.

In the final stage, the researchers make note of several developmental milestones including the evolution of mentoring relationships into partnerships that are more collegial and collaborative and influenced less by broad differences in perceived power as well as a sense of relief gained after achieving tenure and promotion. These developments in professional identity allow seasoned counselor educators to seek validation both internally and externally (Gibson et al., 2015). Feeling more secure in their professional duties, many counselor educators at this stage of their development choose to take on leadership roles in professional organizations as a service to the field. Service positions such as these are critical to the professional identity development of counselor educators, as reported by Woo, et al. (2016). They interviewed ten leaders in the counseling field and found that between them, membership in professional counseling organizations was the most common factor associated with the development of

professional identity. Interestingly, membership in professional organizations was found to be another contributing factor to the professional identity development of counselors-in-training and new counselors (Gibson et al., 2010; Gibson et al., 2012; Luke & Goodrich, 2010) and CEDS (Limberg et al., 2013; Nelson et al., 2006; Protivnak & Foss, 2009).

Professional identity development for counselor educators is a process that continues across the lifespan. There does not appear to be a clear end point, though the process is different for individuals at different stages of their careers (Gibson et al., 2015; Magnuson, 2002; Woo et al., 2016). Among the literature related to professional identity development for counselor educators, several themes appear consistent. First, that mentorship is valuable across the spectrum of professional identity development and while universally helpful, will likely take different forms depending on the relationship between the mentor and mentee and the development of their own professional identities (Gibson et al., 2015; Protivnak & Foss, 2009; Woo et al., 2016). In addition, the idea that professional atmosphere and climate are influential in professional identity development seems to be present throughout the literature. In fact, Magnuson and colleagues (2009) noted that, “the extent to which participants successfully achieved tenure and promotion paralleled their satisfaction with the support they received from colleagues and members of administration” (p. 60). Considering that, advanced doctoral students and new counselor educators seeking employment would be wise to strongly consider the dynamics of departmental politics, relationships between current faculty members, and opportunities for mentoring have the potential to affect their professional identity development. Lastly, our current understanding of professional identity development supports the idea that, for counselor educators, this process begins during doctoral training (Gibson et al., 2015; Calley & Hawley, 2008). While this probably comes as no surprise to counselor educators or CEDS, the

implications for doctoral training are noteworthy. CACREP (2015) explicitly refers to professional identity development in its standards for doctoral preparation, but other factors such as mentorship by faculty, opportunities or encouragement to conduct research, or opportunities to engage in a variety of leadership opportunities all have implications for how CEDS develop into counselor educators. The intentionality with which programs attend to factors such as these will greatly impact the professional trajectory of their students and graduates.

Counselors-in-Training and Professional Counselors

Instilling a strong identity as a professional counselor is an important part of professional identity development for counselors-in-training (CACREP, 2015; Kaplan et al., 2014).

Recognizing this, many counselor education programs have recently revised their curriculum to place an added emphasis on professional identity development for counselors-in-training (Woo et al., 2014). Moreover, there has been recent attention in the literature related to the measurement and assessment of professional identity development in counselor-in-training and new counselors (Emerson, 2010; Woo & Henfield, 2015). These measures reflect a recent growth in understanding about the importance of professional identity developmental across the field of counseling.

As a whole, the process of professional identity is developmental in nature, systemically structured, and heavily influenced by one's thoughts about themselves as well as the perceptions of supervisors, mentors, and other external evaluators (Auxier et al., 2003; Gibson et al., 2010; Gibson et al., 2012; Moss et al., 2014). As counselors-in-training develop into new counselors, many of the processes of development remain consistent, albeit developmentally specific (Gibson et al., 2010; Moss et al., 2014). In other words, counselors tend to develop their

professional identity in cycles: as these cycles progress the experiences that drive them become more professionally advanced, though they remain consistently cyclical.

As an example, Auxier et al. (2003) used a grounded theory approach to better understand the process of professional identity development for master's level counselors-in-training. The authors surveyed a total of eight students with four identifying as male, four as female, and all identifying as White or European American. Additionally, six participants had a concentration in mental health, one in school counseling, and one in student affairs. Auxier et al. (2003) described their model as a process of Recycling Identity Formation wherein students are initially exposed to conceptual learning in the form of classroom experiences and reading. This learning spurs the development of their professional identity and sets the foundation for the more experiential components that come with skills classes, group experiences, and direct client contact. Professional identity development is further reinforced by external evaluation that, according to the authors, can either confirm or deny students' own thoughts about their identity as counselors. Per the name, this process then "recycles" as students gain new conceptual knowledge that informs their work with clients and is later evaluated by supervisors, mentors, or more experienced counselors (Auxier et al., 2003). It is important to note that while this study is helpful in understanding the process and scope of identity development for counselor-in-training, it is not without limitations. This study is limited by a small number of participants and a lack of diversity in terms of professional orientation and race/ethnicity. With a larger participant pool, the authors would be able to include more participants of color and with different specializations (e.g., school counseling, rehabilitation counseling). The being said, this study is still helpful in understanding the parallels of professional identity development for counselors-in-training.

Several of those parallels can be found in the work of Gibson, et al. (2010) who also conducted a grounded theory study related to professional identity development of master's level counselors-in-training. They recruited participants from one of two campus located in different geographical regions of the US. Overall, the authors interviewed a total of 43 participants at different stages of their training (before course work = 11, before practicum = 7, before internship = 12, at graduation = 13) and who represented two different counseling specialties (school counseling = 21, marriage, family, and couples counseling = 22). Additional demographic data were not collected in an effort to minimize the power differential between the participants (who were also students in the researchers' academic program). Despite this, the authors confirmed that at least 25% of their participant pool was represented by someone who held some form of minority identity. In their results, Gibson et al. (2010) detailed their three stage model that suggests that counselors-in-training progress through the process of professional identity development by first focusing on external validation, then course work, experience, and commitment, and finally self-validation. Progress through these stages is facilitated through experiences in three separate transformational tasks: transformation to systemic identity, responsibility for professional growth, and definition of counseling. At each stage of development, students are constantly working to refine their understanding of their place in their professional systems, what responsibilities they hold within those systems, and what it means to be a counselor with respect to a singular point on a developmental timeline.

These transformational tasks share common themes with the process of Recycling Identity Formation outlined by Auxier et al. (2003). According to Gibson et al. (2010), students develop a systemic identity by first focusing how their individual skills and professional qualities define them and then moving to an understanding of how these skills allow them to operate as a

member of the mental health community. Similarly, Auxier et al. (2003) noted how counselors-in-training will define themselves first by what they learn (e.g., having gone through a group counseling class) and then by what they can do (e.g., being able to lead a grief-support group). Next, they rely on external evaluation of trusted supervisors and evaluators as members of their larger mental health community. Both models describe a process where counselors-in-training rely on their skills for initial feelings of connection to their professional identity as counselors and then work to incorporate an understanding of how other counselors and supervisors affect that professional identity. The second transformational task (Gibson et al., 2010) also aligns well with the model proposed by Auxier et al. (2003) in that both highlight the importance of gradually increasing responsibility on the part of the counselor-in-training for their own professional growth. In the transformational tasks model this takes the form of a shift from a dependence on classroom learning experiences to other educational experiences facilitated by the student.

In the same way, Auxier et al. (2003) describes a cyclical process of conceptual learning that must progress from didactic classroom experiences to learning initiated by the counselor-in-training as they enter practicum and internship and finish with their classroom education. In both models, much of this learning is likely to be associated with more complicated clinical cases and responsibilities, which in-turn have been directly linked to professional identity development for counselors-in-training (Nelson & Jackson, 2003; Prosek & Hurt, 2014). The final transformational task of internalizing a personal definition of counseling (Gibson et al., 2010) is most similar to the process of Recycling Identity Formation not in the content of the task itself, but in the process that facilitates the transformation. Gibson and colleagues (2010) note that as they develop their professional identities, counselors-in-training will move from imitating the

opinions of their faculty and supervisors to voicing their own internalized opinions about the work of counseling. Auxier et al. (2003) described a comparable process where counselors-in-training must initially rely on information gathered from their skills classes, group experiences, and supervision to conceptualize the work of counseling. Later, as students begin to be externally evaluated, they gain the opportunity to either accept that evaluation or reject that it in favor of their own, internalized assessment. In this way, they bear a greater responsibility for their clinical competence and can differentiate their ideas about counseling from those of their evaluators.

This evolution is well represented in the work of Moss, et al. (2014) who developed a parallel model of professional identity development for practicing counselors. The authors recruited a total of 26 participants who were actively working in either a school or mental health setting (school = 15, mental health = 11). Of those 26 participants, 21 identified as male and five as female. Additionally, 22 identified as White with four identifying as African American. Six themes are presented as being impact in the professional identity development of counselors: adjustment to expectations, confidence and freedom, separation versus integration, experienced guide, continuous learning, and work with clients. These themes are represented in a three-stage model that highlights progression from external validation, towards experience and professional development, and finally self-validation. The model is very similar to the others produced by these authors in their series on professional identity development (Gibson et al., 2010; Dollarhide et al., 2013; Gibson et al., 2015) and contains parallel theoretical components. Moss et al. (2014) highlighted this as evidence of the progressive nature of professional identity development for individuals in the field of counseling while also drawing attention to some of the elements unique to the process for counselors in practice. For example, while counselors-in-training (Gibson et al., 2010) and professional counselors (Moss et al., 2014) both move through a series

of three stages that are defined by first receiving external validation, moving towards more experiential opportunities, and finally arriving at a place of self-validation, the parallel developmental processes are separated through experience and depth of understanding.

Counselors-in-training are much more likely to begin the process of professional identity development with low self-efficacy related to their identity as a counselor and a high degree of anxiety related to clinical work (Daniels & Larson, 2001; Leach et al., 1997; Prosek & Hurt, 2014; Stoltenberg & Delworth, 1987). In contrast, professional counselors feel much more secure in their identity as helping professionals but struggle when that identity is challenged by the realities of full-time work (Mellin et al., 2011; Moss et al., 2014). As they continue their professional identity development, counselors-in-training are better able to incorporate feedback from peers and supervisors and improve in their clinical skill (Auxier et al., 2003). Professional counselors at this stage rely less on feedback from supervisors and more on reports from clients and continuing education (Moss et al., 2014). Towards the end of the model, counselors-in-training feel much more connected to the field of counseling as a whole and may even choose to pursue leadership opportunities as a way of furthering their professional development (Gibson et al., 2010; Luke & Goodrich, 2010). Similarly, professional counselors will likely be more successful in their ability to integrate their work and life, but may also struggle with issues related to burnout and compassion fatigue (Lee et al., 2010; Moss et al., 2014; Thompson et al., 2014).

Much like counselor educators, the process of professional identity development for counselors-in-training and professional counselors is one that spans a lifetime. These two groups follow parallel processes that both involve growth through professional community, clinical work, and personal challenge (Auxier et al., 2013; Gibson et al., 2010; Moss et al., 2014; Woo et

al., 2017). For either group, part of this process might involve doctoral study in counselor education. The following section continues the review by examining the processes of professional identity development for CEDS in general as well as each of their unique professional identities.

Doctoral Students

There is ample evidence that professional identity development for counseling professionals can be thought of as existing on a spectrum, both within specific counseling identities (e.g., counselor-in-training, licensed professional counselor, tenured counselor educator, etc.) and across the developmental spectrum (i.e., from student interested in counseling to post-tenured counselor educator) (Calley & Hawley, 2008; Gibson et al., 2010; Puglia, 2008; Woo et al., 2014; Woo et al., 2017). Within this spectrum, CEDS can be thought of as existing somewhere in the middle. They are likely influenced by the experiences of their faculty, whose own professional identity development has a significant impact of that of their students (Choate et al., 2005). Moreover, they are also simultaneously influenced by their experiences within their master's program and as doctoral students (Dollarhide et al., 2013). Experiences as doctoral student are varied and complex but can often be aligned with one of the five major training areas for CEDS: supervision, counseling, leadership, research, and teaching (CACREP, 2015). In considering the nature of professional identity development for CEDS, it is important to consider both the unique professional identity that exists on the developmental spectrum of counseling professionals (e.g., counselor education doctoral student) and also the smaller, albeit equally unique, professional identities (e.g., supervisor, counselor, leader, researcher, teacher) that inform that development.

This is well represented in the work of Dollarhide et al. (2013) who conducted a qualitative investigation of professional identity development for CEDS using a grounded theory approach. Their work produced a model that highlights the place of professional identity development for CEDS along the spectrum of counseling professionals while also drawing attention to the unique professional identities that inform that identity. The authors interviewed a total of 23 participants at specific points during their development. The participants included 18 females and five males. Of these, 14 identified as White, eight as African American or Black, with one identifying as multi-racial. Over half of the participants had a background in school counseling ($n = 13$) with smaller groups having backgrounds in mental health counseling ($n = 6$), marriage and family counseling ($n = 2$), rehabilitation counseling ($n = 1$) and pastoral counseling ($n = 1$). Much like the other models in their series of articles on professional identity development (e.g., Gibson et al., 2010; Gibson et al., 2015; Moss et al., 2014), the model described by Dollarhide and colleagues (2013) focused on three transformational tasks that mark the development of professional identity for CEDS, specifically the integration of multiple identities, gaining a sense of evolving legitimacy, and developing a personal acceptance of responsibility.

The integration of multiple identities task describes the process of evolving an identity from that of counselor, into PhD student, and then into new counselor educator (Dollarhide et al., 2013). This process begins as CEDS receive external validation related to their identity as counselors, much the same as their master's level counterparts (Gibson et al., 2015). The process continues as CEDS engage in experiences that are more consistent with the work of their emerging identity (counselor educator) and less consistent with the work of their established identity (professional counselor), such as teaching, conducting research, supervision, and

mentoring (Limberg et al., 2013; Woo et al., 2017). The second developmental task, gaining an evolving sense of legitimacy, centers around CEDS' experiences of success. CEDS are likely to have a low self-efficacy related to activities they have little experience in, like teaching (Prieto & Altmaier, 1994). This self-efficacy increases over time as CEDS develop their skills, receive positive feedback, and further develop their new professional identity (Dollarhide et al., 2013; Leach et al., 1997). The final transformational task, the development of a personal acceptance of responsibility, highlights the transition from “person being trained” to “person doing the training”. As they further develop their professional identities, CEDS come to embrace the responsibility of training future counselors, conducting ethical research, and engaging in effective teaching (Dollarhide et al., 2013; Limberg et al., 2013). Ultimately, progression through these tasks can be viewed as a movement from a professional identity primarily as a doctoral student and towards a professional identity primarily as a counselor educator.

Movement through the spectrum of professional identity development in the field of counseling is based largely on experiences within specific professional activities. For CEDS, these professional activities mostly fall in line with the identities of supervisor, counselor, leader, researcher, and teacher (CACREP, 2015; Dollarhide et al., 2013; Limberg et al., 2013; Woo et al., 2017). In conjunction, these identities support the formation of the broader professional identities of counselor education doctoral student and counselor educator. Separately, these identities develop independently based on experiences within specific professional activities. Each of these unique professional identities are complex enough to warrant individualized attention in the literature. Fortunately, some of this work has begun, though there are still large gaps that need to be addressed.

Leader. The unique professional identity of Leader is perhaps the most well-researched identity across the field of counseling. While there is limited understanding of how this identity manifests within CEDS specifically, a great deal is known about the development of leaders in other areas of counseling. Gibson (2016) draws attention to many of these themes in her critical analysis of the parallels between professional identity development and leadership identity development for counseling professionals, namely the developmental process, transitional guidance, professional experience, and personal and professional congruence. Each of these parallels illuminates a part of the journey for a developing counselor education leader and is supported by existing research on leadership.

The first parallel identified by Gibson (2016) is that of a developmental process. She compares leadership identity development with other models of professional identity development (e.g., Gibson et al., 2010; Gibson et al., 2015; Limberg et al., 2013) that are developmental in nature and rely on the interaction between increasingly successful experiences over a period of time. This theme is consistent with findings presented by Meaney-Walen, et al. (2013) who conducted a mixed-methods study of 58 individuals who held (at the time of the study or previously) leadership positions in the American Counseling Association (ACA) or Chi Sigma Iota (CSI), the International Counseling Honor Society. The authors reported that in 65% of cases, participants reported experiences consistent with the theme of “natural progression”. In text, natural progression is defined as “general, long-term interest or involvement in leadership that began prior to enrollment in a counselor preparation program, as early as childhood, that progressed throughout the lifespan” (Meany-Walen et al., 2013, p. 91). Participants noted how previously being involved in organizations such as Boy Scouts, athletics, or service organizations was influential in their development as a leader, even many decades later. Indeed, those

experiences may have been fundamental in helping participants to recognize opportunities to develop their leadership identity in the future, whether those opportunities were intentionally sought or occurred by happenstance (Magnuson et al., 2003).

Gibson (2016) also draws attention to the theme of transitional guidance, which she defines as “the reliance on experts, experienced guides, supervisors, teachers, mentors, and/or faculty during specific transitional periods of development” (p. 34). Literature on professional identity development is laden with themes related to the importance of mentorship (Dollarhide et al., 2013, Gibson et al., 2010; Gibson et al., 2015, Limberg et al., 2013) and leadership identity development is no different. Studies have noted that mentoring relationships are some of the most important relationships for developing leaders (Meany-Walen et al., 2013). In fact, developing leaders often look to their mentors for guidance on how to progress and grow in their leadership skills (Magnuson et al., 2003). Quality mentorship is noted as one of the most valuable experiences for counselor educators just entering the field (Gibson et al., 2015; Magnuson, 2002; Perera-Diltz & Duba Sauerheber, 2017). On the opposite end of the professional spectrum, mentorship is likewise noted as instrumental in the professional development of advanced counselor educators in leadership positions (Woo et al., 2016). Mentorship, as a component of leadership identity development, never loses its impact and seems to be valuable across the spectrum of professional identity development for counseling professionals.

Gibson’s (2016) final two parallels between professional identity development and leadership identity development are professional experience and personal and professional congruence. Professional experience, the act of increasing exposure to experiences related to identity development, is a hallmark of professional identity development. This is likely why

organizations such as CSI place such a high value on creating leadership experiences for its members, and why those members consistently cite those experiences as critical to their professional development (Luke & Goodrich, 2010; Wahesh et al., 2018; Wahesh & Myers, 2014). This experience also appears to be related to how individuals come to think of themselves as leaders, personally and professionally. This congruence, though more abstract than the previous themes, is highlighted by the increasing roles that leadership and service play in the lives of counselor educators as they develop (Gibson et al., 2015; Magnuson et al., 2009). Through increased experience, counselor educators come to understand themselves as leaders, resolve some of their imposter syndrome, and embrace the responsibility they have to progress the professional values of the profession.

Researcher. Next to leader, the unique professional identity of researcher is perhaps the most well-researched. An abundance of passionate, well-qualified, and methodologically diverse researchers will be needed for counselors to continue to be competitive in the professional market of mental health service providers. To this end, it is beneficial for counselor educators to increase their understanding of researcher identity development in order that they may intentionally promote it within their classes and across their programs.

Jorgensen and Duncan (2015b) reflect this ideal in their phenomenological investigation of researcher identity development for master's level counselors-in-training. The authors recruited twelve students who participated in a combination of individual and focus group interviews. Of the 12 participants, nine identified as female and three as male. Additionally, five identified primarily as school counselors with the other seven identifying as clinical mental health counselors. After analyzing the data, the researchers reported a three-stage process that included stagnation, negotiation, and stabilization. Furthermore, Jorgensen and Duncan (2015b)

identified five primary themes that manifested within stage, those being: external facilitators of lower levels of Researcher Identity (RI), external facilitators of higher level of RI, internal facilitators of higher levels of RI, internal facilitators of lower levels of RI, and faculty as salient to the RI process. As counselors-in-training began to formulate their researcher identity, they found themselves stagnating, or not knowing how to conceptualize themselves as researchers. Though largely intrapersonal, much of these thoughts are connected to previous exposure to research and faculty's involvement in the research process (Jorgensen & Duncan, 2015a, 2015b). As they continue in the development of their researcher identity, counselors-in-training will likely find themselves in the negotiation stage. This stage is defined by an increase in confidence in the ability to consume and conduct research. Counselors-in-training engage in the process of negotiating the boundaries of their identities of researcher and practitioner (Jorgensen & Duncan, 2015a, 2015b). Lastly, counselors-in-training move to the stage of stabilization where they are most influenced by their internal facilitators of RI and conceptualize the work of scholarship as existing on a spectrum instead of only being about conducting original research (Jorgensen & Duncan, 2015a, 2015b). At this point, counselors-in-training are likely to be close to graduating and transitioning their professional identity into that of a professional counselor. Regardless of their professional specialization, counselors stand to benefit from a clearer understanding of their own identity as a researcher in order that they are better able to adhere to the ethical guidelines related to the production and consumption of scholarly work (American Counseling Association [ACA], 2014; American School Counseling Association, 2016; Gibson et al., 2012).

Researcher identity development for doctoral students continues on this same spectrum but is differentiated by more developed curriculum related to research and different outcome expectations than master's level counselors (CACREP, 2015). Doctoral students, in general, are

assumed to be capable of producing and consuming research in equal parts. As they continue their professional identity development, doctoral students in education embrace this idea and feel more comfortable and confident in their identity as a researcher relative to how successful they have been at publishing or conducting original research (Lambie et al., 2014). Similarly, CEDS who are actively engaged in publishing or conducting original research have a higher self-efficacy related to their abilities as a researcher (Lambie & Vaccaro, 2011). Interestingly, this increased sense of confidence in an identity as a researcher is unrelated to a student's reported interest in research (Lambie et al., 2014; Lambie & Vaccaro, 2011). In other words, the more that a student *does* research the more likely they are to feel confident in their abilities as a researcher, regardless of how much they initially like it or feel drawn to it. This is incredibly important, considering the movement towards a scientist-practitioner model in the field of counseling (ACA, 2014; CACREP, 2015; Kaplan & Gladding, 2011) and doctoral students' lack of confidence in their abilities as a researcher, especially in the beginning of their training (Lamar & Helm, 2017; Lambie et al., 2014; Lambie & Vaccaro, 2011; Limberg et al., 2013). This initial lack of confidence, while developmentally appropriate (Dollarhide et al., 2013), could be affected through intentional exposure to research activity or other experiential involvement in research, like research mentoring (Anekstein & Vereen, 2018; Borders et al., 2012).

Mentoring in counselor education has been a popular topic of interest in the literature in the past decade and has many implications for researcher identity development for counselor educators. Briggs and Pehrsson (2008) expand on this in their quantitative exploration of research mentorship of pre-tenured faculty in counselor education. In their study, the authors surveyed 139 pre-tenured counselor educators working in CACREP accredited counseling

programs. Of those participants, slightly over half (59%) identified as female while the remaining participants (41%) identified as male. Interestingly, 98% of the study population reported a rank of assistant professor with only three participants indicating otherwise. While this does not diminish the importance of the results, it should be noted that implications drawn from this study might not reflect the experiences of associate level professors in counselor education, even if they identify as pre-tenured. Results indicated that of those surveyed, approximately 77% were actively receiving research mentorship ($n=107$). Of those respondents, large majorities indicated that research mentorship was most helping in navigating the promotion and tenure process ($n=87$) and through feedback received on writing ($n=70$). Additionally, nearly all of those respondents receiving research mentorship noted that the purpose was to help secure refereed publications ($n=95$) and presentations ($n=72$), among other things. From a quality perspective, these respondents noted that generally their mentoring relationships were cooperative ($n=84$) and that open communication was encouraged ($n=70$). Conversely, a small number of respondents indicated that their mentoring relationships were either competitive ($n=4$), individualistic ($n=15$), or that open communication was discouraged ($n=3$). Borders et al. (2011) supports many of the same themes in their discussion of a successful mentoring program for tenure-seeking faculty in counselor education. While not specifically related to mentorship in research, the authors comment that mentors can help new faculty in “prioritizing their time among teaching, research, and service” and working so that their “teaching, research, and service activities complement and develop one another” (p.183). This structured guidance might help to ameliorate some of the tension new faculty often feel related to research, publication, and the “publish or perish” mindset (Gibson et al., 2015; Magnuson, 2002; Magnuson et al., 2003).

The distinct professional identity of researcher is in parallel to other professional identities in the field of counseling in regard to its place on a developmental continuum. Counselors-in-training are hesitant to think of themselves as researchers and unsure about how to use research to full effect with clients (Jorgensen & Duncan, 2015a; 2015b). CEDS may have made some progress related to this dilemma but are still tasked with greater expectations related to scholarly production and establishing a research agenda (CACREP, 2015; Lambie et al., 2014; Limberg et al., 2013). If given the proper support, counselor educators are often successful in building upon this agenda and contributing to the literature, as evidenced by the increasing rate of publications by counselor educators (Lambie et al., 2014). This support sometimes takes the form of research mentorship, the presence of which can leave new counselor educators feeling more confident as researchers (Briggs & Pehrsson, 2008) and the absence of which can leave them feeling frustrated and disheartened (Magnuson et al., 2009). Moving forward, the role of the researcher in counseling and counselor education is only going to become more impactful. A better understanding of the development of this distinct professional identity and how to support researchers at different places in the spectrum of professional identity development are increasingly important questions to consider.

Counselor. A better understanding of the unique professional identity of counselor and how it is understood by individuals with different professional identities within the field of counseling also stands to benefit our understanding of professional identity. If counseling is defined as “a professional relationship that empowers diverse individuals, families, and groups to accomplish mental health, wellness, education, and career goals” (Kaplan et al., 2014), a counselor should be anyone who embodies that definition through their work. Despite that, it is

well documented that individuals who hold different professional identities experience the identity of counselor very differently.

As an example, the definition of counseling provided in the *20/20 Vision* (Kaplan et al., 2014) might feel most salient for master's level counseling professionals working in mental health service agencies, schools, or rehabilitation facilities; and rightly so. These individuals are likely to feel most strongly rooted in their professional identities of counselor while still being influenced by other (likely less prominent) identities such as researcher and leader (Gibson et al., 2012; Jorgensen & Duncan, 2015a; Moss et al., 2014). This experience of being a counselor is going to vary dramatically from a CED who has already established an identity as a counselor and is working to transition towards an identity as a counselor educator (Dollarhide et al., 2013). Similarly, both groups are going to vary in their personal understanding of the identity of counselor when compared to counselor educators, who may be less involved in traditional counseling (i.e. working directly with clients or students) and more involved in research, leadership, and advocacy (Gibson et al., 2015; Reiner et al., 2013). Considering that, is it to be understood that counselor educators are less of a *counselor* than a counselor-in-training because less of their time is spent working directly clients or students? Likewise, would a CED working in a clinical internship necessarily have a stronger professional identity as a counselor than one with similar training working in a teaching internship? Of courses not. It makes sense, therefore, to understand the term counselor in two ways in relation to professional identity development: (1) as a broad term related to professional identity development applicable to all members of the field of counseling who self-identify as counselors, referred to here as Counselors, and also (2) as a unique professional identity that exists on a developmental spectrum and is related to the work of counseling as suggested by Kaplan et al. (2014), referred to here as counselors.

This differentiation is exemplified in the work of Woo et al. (2017) who conducted a quantitative investigation of the differences in professional identity development for counseling professionals holding different professional identities. The authors surveyed 316 counseling professionals who identified as either master's level counselors-in-training ($n=116$), CEDS ($n=131$), or counselor educators ($n=69$). Using the Professional Identity Scale in Counseling (Woo & Henfield, 2015; Woo et al., 2018), the authors assessed differences in professional identity development between the participants according to six different subscales: engagement behaviors, knowledge of the profession, attitudes, professional roles and expertise, philosophy of the profession, and professional values, with higher scores indicating a greater degree of professional development. Woo et al. (2017) found that counselor educators' responses were significantly higher on all subscales (excluding professional values) than doctoral students', which were in-turn higher than master's level counselors-in-training, leading them to conclude that, "doctoral-level counseling students and counselor educators in this study appeared to have a stronger professional identity than master's level counseling students" (p. 25). This is an excellent example of the professional identity of counselor and the broad range of activities that identity encompasses. Counselor educators are most likely to identify strongly as a counselor because of their increased education, knowledge of the field, and stronger professional identities of researcher, leader, and supervisor. Interestingly, an inverse relationship could exist for the identity of counselor. Whereas counselor educators are most likely to identify as counselors, practicing counseling professionals and master's level counselors-in-training might be the most likely to identify as counselors based on the frequency with which they engage in clinical work. This differentiation can help all counseling professionals to better understand how to help counselors overcome difficulties such as anxiety when working with clients and burnout (Moss.

et al., 2014; Skovholt & Rønnestad, 2003) and how to help counselors better navigate complex professional responsibilities and duties related to teaching and supervision (Calley & Hawley, 2008; Gibson et al., 2015; Woo et al., 2017).

The different ways in which counseling professionals experience the unique professional identity of counselor is evidence of the fact that the identity of counselor, much like that of leader and researcher, exists on a developmental spectrum. To that end, as we continue to broaden our understanding of professional identity development for counseling professionals, it will be important to continue investigating how to support the development of counselor identity in counseling professionals ranging from counselors-in-training to post-tenured counselor educators.

Supervisor. In its Code of Ethics, the ACA (2014) repeatedly emphasizes the importance of clinical supervision for counselors and competence for counselor supervisors. Such attention is indicative of the ethical responsibility inherent in the roles of supervisors, who in their work are often called to wear the hat of gatekeeper, teacher, advocate, consultant, and even counselor. The CACREP (2015) parallels this sentiment with their standards for doctoral level preparation and training in clinical supervision. These standards are expressly supported in the Supervision Best Practice Guidelines (Association for Counselor Education and Supervision [ACES], 2011) which also dictate that, “the supervisor possesses a strong professional identity as a counselor and supervisor” (11.a.iv). Increasing our understanding of supervisor identity development will only aid in our ability to train more competent supervisors and thus, better prepare counselors for work in the field.

An early example of this in the field of counselor education exists in the work of Nelson et al. (2006) who conducted a qualitative study using a grounded theory design to better

understand the process of supervisor development for two groups of CEDS across two different studies. The first group consisted of 13 students, ten of which identified as female. Within that group, seven also identified as White with the remaining seven identifying as Hispanic. In a follow-up study one and a half years later, a second group was evaluated in the same manner and included five students, four of which identified as women. Two individuals in this group identified as White, two as Hispanic, and one as African. Data were collected from the first group of participants using a combination of individual interviews and focus groups at the end of three different semesters where the participants had served as supervisors of master's level practicum students. These data were compiled, analyzed, and presented to following cohort of CEDS following their first experience as supervisors. This second group confirmed, added, and provided additional depth that aided the researchers in data analysis. Data analysis revealed six major themes present across the two groups related to their development as supervisors: learning, supervisee growth, individual uniqueness, reflection, connections, and putting it all together (Nelson et al., 2006).

These themes help to illuminate the process of supervisor identity development for CEDS and are well-supported by more recent additions to the literature. Learning, as a component of professional identity development, is in no way unique to supervisor identity development and is represented as a significant factor in nearly all other research on professional identity development in counseling (Dollarhide et al., 2013; Woo et al., 2014; Woo et al., 2017). Supervisee growth is more unique to the professional identity of supervisor, though has some parallels with CEDS identity development and counselor educator identity development, both of which are informed by the experience of helping other students to grow (Calley & Hawley, 2008; Dollarhide et al., 2013; Gibson et al., 2015; Magnuson et al., 2009). In particular, CEDS seem to

make significant meaning of the parallel process that can occur as they are learning to be supervisors while helping counselors-in-training learn to be counselors (Desmond et al., 2011; Nelson et al., 2006; Trepal & Hammer, 2014). Continuing through the themes identified by Nelson et al. (2006), SACES supports the importance of recognizing individual uniqueness among supervisees, especially regarding evaluation and assessment (2011). Likewise, CEDS working as supervisors for master's level counselors-in-training have identified the importance of building individual relationships to the success of the supervision process (Majcher & Daniluk, 2009). Reflection and connections, like the theme of learning (Nelson et al., 2006), are present in much of the literature related to professional identity development.

Counselor educators seem to benefit from reflecting on their own development as they progress through their professional identity development (Magnuson et al., 2009). The importance of building connections is almost universal, with master's level counseling students (Gibson et al., 2010), CEDS (Dollarhide et al., 2013), counselor educators (Gibson et al., 2015) and counseling professionals (Woo et al., 2017) each identifying the importance of connecting with individuals who positively influence their professional development, either in the role of peer, mentor, or supervisor. Lastly, the theme of putting it all together (Nelson et al., 2006) is consistent with the theme of evolving legitimacy found in other areas of professional identity development. As individuals gain more experience in a unique professional identity, like researcher (Lamar & Helm, 2017; Lambie et al., 2014), it becomes easier to “put it all together” and use that additional experience to conceptualize the identity from a more developed or sophisticated perspective. This, in turns, leads to an internal feeling of legitimacy. A novice supervisor, for example, might not understand the connection between supervision and remediation and gatekeeping, whereas a supervisor who has “put it all together” is able to

conceptualize remediation and gatekeeping as part of a supervisor's ultimate responsibility of ensuring client welfare. In recognizing this connection, the experienced supervisor is ideally able to reflect on their growth and come to recognize themselves as having developed into an established professional supervisor.

The unique professional identity of supervisor in counseling is an amalgamation of a number of distinct roles including gatekeeper, teacher, advocate, consultant, and counselor. Faithful execution of the duties associated with each of these roles is critical to maintaining the ethical and best practice standards for the clinical supervision of counselors (ACA, 2014; ACES, 2011). Further investigation into the professional identity development of supervisors will only aid in the ability of counseling professionals to work as effective supervisors and better prepare the next generation of counselors.

Teacher. The unique professional identity of teacher is core to the larger professional identity of counselor educator. Working as a teacher is a salient part of the professional identity development of both doctoral students (Limberg et al., 2013) and counselor educators (Gibson et al., 2015; Woo et al., 2017), though it is not without its struggles. A decade ago, Hall and Hulse (2009) reported that doctoral students graduating from counselor education programs felt generally unprepared for their work as college-level teachers. Even students who took a course specifically related to teaching in college felt that it was not helpful and that they were no better prepared than students who did not take the course (Hall & Hulse, 2009). In a parallel finding, Barrio Minton et al. (2014) conducted a content analysis of journals in counselor education for articles related to teaching and learning published between January 2001 and December 2010 and found that alarmingly few of them were firmly grounded in theory. Specifically, the authors reported that approximately 15% were clearly grounded in teaching and learning theory and that

only 2.17% of the articles surveyed focused directly on doctoral-level curricula (Barrio Minton et al., 2014). Together, these findings painted a grim picture for the future of quality pedagogy in counselor education. CEDS, generally speaking, were not being intentionally and effectively prepared to fulfill their future roles as teachers, a role which was likely to consume most of their time upon entering the field (Davis et al., 2006; Magnuson et al., 2009). Conjointly, counselor educators (those doing the preparing), were publishing articles related to teaching and learning that were not firmly grounded in theory related to teaching and learning, implying that their preparation of CEDS likely was not either.

In what may have been a direct response to this, CACREP significantly revised its standards related to teacher preparation for doctoral students in counselor education programs (2015). The revised standards added additional requirements for pedagogical training for CEDS and were better aligned with the ethical responsibilities (ACA, 2014) and best practices (ACES, 2016) for teaching in counselor education. Concurrently, Barrio Minton et al. (2018) published an update to their previous findings and emphasized some notable improvements that had occurred within the following five years. The authors reported that the percentage of articles related to teaching and learning that were clearly grounded in theory increased from 14.78% of the sample to 21.8%. In addition, it was reported that 57.89% of the sample was comprised of empirical articles, indicating a greater degree of balance between theoretical and empirical publications regarding teaching and learning than was seen previously (Barrio Minton et al., 2018).

While the additions to the CACREP 2016 Standards and increase in rigor and theoretical grounding for published articles related to teaching and learning should be celebrated, there is evidence to suggest that these improvements have not yet universally translated into more

meaningful experiences for CEDS in the development of their identities as teachers. To better understand the experience of teacher preparation for CEDS, Waalkes et al. (2018) interviewed a total of nine participants and analyzed their responses using a consensual quality research approach. The participants were beginning counselor educators (less than four years' experience) who identified as a mix of male ($n=5$), female ($n=4$), Caucasian/White ($n=7$), Asian American/Pacific Islander ($n=1$), and African American/Black ($n=1$). Participants were recruited through a professional counseling listserv (CESNET) and represented a variety of different doctoral experiences and programs. Data were gathered from individual interviews conducted over the phone and analyzed according to guidelines established by Hill (2012) and consistent with the consensual quality research method. Themes were created and sorted into categories of general, typical, or variant depending on how frequently they emerged in the data among all participants (Hill, 2012). The most general (i.e., frequent) theme present among all participants was a feeling that the training they received in their doctoral programs was insufficient in preparing them to work as teachers (Waalkes et al., 2018). Typical (i.e., frequent, though less so than general) subthemes included feeling unprepared to work as counselor educators, that there was a lack of emphasis on teaching within their doctoral program, and there was too little course work devoted to teacher preparation. Additionally, typical themes of feeling unprepared in various aspects of teaching (e.g., grading, course design, classroom management), teaching techniques, and andragogy were also identified.

Findings such as those reported by Waalkes et al. (2018) have important implications for the process of teacher identity development in CEDS. While very little has been written about teacher identity development specifically, we have seen how the field has grown to better understand the importance of andragogic preparation for CEDS and how there may yet be room

to grow in that regard. Ideally, that growth will include our understanding of the need to scaffold learning experiences, provide meaningful mentorship opportunities, and be informed by the experiences of doctoral students during their preparation as teachers.

For example, considering that the professional identity development of CEDS is heavily influenced by formal and informal mentorship from supervisors and faculty members (Dollarhide et al., 2013; Limberg et al., 2013; Woo et al., 2017), it might be beneficial for counselor education programs to consider how to implement a mentorship program specifically related to helping doctoral students develop as teachers. While some might argue that this structure already exists informally in the form of requirements for teaching experiences for CEDS and the supervision of those experiences by counselor educators (CACREP, 2015), there is still ample leeway within the 2016 Standards that allows for those experiences to vary in quality and form of implementation. Baltrinic et al. (2018) shed some light on this issue in their study that used a Q methodology approach to survey a total of 25 counselor education faculty members to better understand their teaching mentorship styles. The authors found that 20 of their participants were represented by one of three teaching mentorship style categories: supervisor, facilitator, or evaluator (8, 7, and 5, respectively). Per the authors' descriptions, facilitators often preferred doctoral co-instructors to work without formative feedback related to their teaching style or development as an educator in favor of a more discovery-oriented approach. In contrast, supervisors valued giving student-teachers direct feedback on their work that is often based in the teacher-mentor's own experience. Supervisors actively involved student-teachers in the course planning process and were overt about how assignments and lessons were connected to and constructed through theory (Baltrinic et al., 2018). Lastly, evaluators emphasized critical thinking within their doctoral co-instructors and worked diligently to help them evaluate their

effectiveness and gauge student understanding. This often came at the expense of less classroom structure, with evaluators spending less time on course design or rubric construction.

While there is no one correct way to approach structure a co-teaching experience with a CEDS, some intentional approaches may be more developmentally appropriate than others. The developmental scaffolding and formative feedback inherent in the approach of the Supervisor (Baltrinic et al., 2018) might help CEDS to better incorporate external validation and receive constructive criticism related to their development as teachers (Dollarhide et al., 2013).

Conversely, the “sink or swim” approach more consistent with the role of Facilitator (Baltrinic et al., 2018) might prove to be less helpful for CEDS who are already feeling overwhelmed as they work through a major identity transition (Dollarhide et al., 2013, Limberg et al., 2013) and may even leave them with negative feelings about working as an educator later in their career (Magnuson et al., 2001). This is especially true of CEDS who are enrolled at programs with very high research activity, which often place less attention on the development of their CEDS as teachers (as opposed to researchers), even in the softer disciplines like psychology and counseling (Reneau, 2011). Regardless of the type of program they are enrolled in, CEDS would benefit greatly from inclusion of more structure in their formal teaching experiences and in the development of their identities as teachers.

Like mentorship styles in teaching, there is no one right way to accomplish this. Structure could be programmatic, individualized to the student, unique to the faculty member, or a combination of all three. Regardless of how it is provided, structure that aids in the development of CEDS’ identities as teachers should be informed by our understanding of the historical deficits in this area as well as our understanding of quality teaching in counselor education.

As a whole, CEDS benefit from a combination of teaching experiences that are experiential in nature (Hunt & Gilmore, 2011; Baltrinic et al., 2016) and informed by didactic learning experiences (Elliott et al., 2019; Hunt & Gilmore, 2011). Within the classroom, a progressive structure of exposure to more challenging and developmentally appropriate teaching tasks paired with concrete feedback and suggestions along the journey helps CEDS resolve their initial anxiety and feel more comfortable in their roles as teachers (Baltrinic et al., 2016). These teaching tasks might be informed by the work of Swank and Houseknecht (2019) who used the Delphi method to identify 153 teaching competencies in counselor education that were sorted into four categories: knowledge, skills, professional behaviors, and dispositions. Included were items such as, “knows research regarding how adults learn”, “engage in problem solving”, and explain concepts clearly” (p. 169). Competencies such as these might be used explicitly as goals for a CEDS during a particular teaching experience or more generally as guidelines to help counselor educators determine what feedback might be most helpful. Furthermore, an intentional effort by counselor educators to help CEDS achieve competence in the areas of knowledge and skills could naturally promote more evidence-based teaching approaches in counselor education, something that is still very needed (Malott et al., 2014; Barrio Minton et al., 2018).

The future of the field of counseling lies firmly in the hands of practicing counselors. They are serving as the field’s representatives: working directly with clients to promote wellness and encourage growth. This work, in turn, cannot be accomplished without quality training and teaching from counselor educators. Counselor educators who are more intentionally structured in their teaching mentorship styles, offer formative feedback, and provide CEDS with teaching responsibilities that are both challenging and developmentally appropriate create a better experience for CEDS working to become teachers (Baltrinic et al., 2016; Baltrinic et al., 2018;

Elliot et al., 2019; Hunt & Gilmore, 2011). These students are the future generation of counselor educators and will shortly be training the future generations of practicing counselors; the importance of their development as teachers simply cannot be understated. The field of counseling has a responsibility to utilize the momentum surrounding this topic to continue to push for structure, standards, and formal competencies for doctoral education that will ensure that CEDS graduating are firmly rooted in each of their unique professional identities, educator included.

Theoretical Frame

In the following section, I briefly review Experiential Learning Theory (ELT) (Kolb, 1984) and discuss its merits as a theoretical framework to understand professional identity development for counseling professionals, specifically the development of teacher identity for CEDS.

Experiential Learning Theory

Experiential Learning Theory (Kolb, 1984) is a theory of teaching and learning that suggests that an individual is best able to learn when they are given a demonstration or presented with a concept related to new knowledge, able to reflect on it, given time to consider how it fits with their existing knowledge, and then allowed to practice with this new understanding. Experiential Learning Theory is a natural fit for much of the required curriculum for counseling students in that it emphasizes a combination of practice and reflection, components that are curricular requirements in accredited counselor education (CACREP, 2015). Moreover, ELT is already well regarded in the counseling literature as being an effective approach to teaching a number of counseling courses including multicultural counseling (Arthur & Achenbach, 2002; Villalba & Redmond, 2008), career counseling (Fulton & Gonzalez, 2015), and counseling skills

(Huerta-Wong & Schoech, 2010; Ziff & Beamish, 2004). Experiential Learning Theory is a helpful framework from which to conceptualize professional identity development in counseling professionals due to the fact that *becoming* closely parallels *doing*. Whether they are counselors-in-training, counselor education doctoral students (CEDS), or counselor educators, the development of that professional identity (i.e., becoming) is wholly influenced by the behaviors and experiences of the individuals (i.e., doing). Counselors-in-training progress in their professional identities as lessons learned in the classroom are translated into perceived successes with clients (Gibson et al., 2010). Similarly, the work and experiences of CEDS help them to develop the unique professional identities of counselor educator, supervisor, leader, researcher, counselor, and teacher, each in accordance with the amount of experience devoted to it (Dollarhide et al., 2013; Limberg et al., 2013). CEDS with more experience related to research (Lamar & Helm, 2017; Lambie et al., 2014) or teaching (Elliot et al., 2019) develop stronger identities in those areas than students with less experience. Counselor educator progress through their own professional identity development as they encounter experiences that help them to navigate the hurdles associated with promotion and tenure, being a new faculty member, and navigating university politics (Gibson et al., 2015; Magnuson et al., 2009; Woo et al., 2017). A common theme present among each of these forms of professional identity development is the necessity of doing, or experiencing. Experiential Learning Theory is a helpful way to conceptualize this and draw connections across the many spectrums of identity development in the field of counseling.

While Kolb (1984) is credited for the creation of Experiential Learning Theory and its subsequent model, his work draws on a number of other education scholars that preceded him. Dewey (1938) was one of the first to explore the significance of personal experience related to

education. He argued that learning occurs best when students were treated as more than empty vessels to be filled with information by an expert instructor or lecturer. Lewin (1951) further elaborated on this idea and discussed the merits of educational experiences designed so that students could actively participate as part of their learning. Furthermore, Piaget (1970) introduced fundamental ideas about the importance of the environment or setting to a person's learning. Each of these theorists contributed fundamental material to what Kolb (1984) ultimately coined as experiential learning theory.

Kolb's model consists of four stages that a learner must progress through sequentially in order to reach a desired learning outcome. Kolb labels these stages as *concrete experience*, *reflective observation*, *abstract conceptualization*, and *active experimentation*. It is important to note that while Kolb does stress the importance of completing a full cycle of the model, he also states that learners may enter in at any point. However, traditionally, the model is conceptualized as beginning with *concrete experience* and ending with *active experimentation* (Kolb, 1984).

Concrete Experience

In the first stage of Kolb's model, learners are presented with new information in a concrete, easy-to-grasp manner. This does not mean that the information itself must be basic, only that the way in which it is delivered allows the student to begin to understand the fundamentals. For instance, in a counseling theories class in a master's level counseling program students are likely to be taught the theory and practice of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT). Through lecture, they are likely to be introduced to concepts like schemas, automatic thoughts, and cognitive restructuring. At the end of this lecture they may be able to recite a definition for each of these terms, but they won't yet know how to apply them effectively with a client. At this

point in Kolb's cycle, this concrete experience of didactic instruction serves as a way to set the foundation for increased understanding that comes with the next stage.

Reflective Observation

In this next stage, learners are invited to begin the process of integrating their new knowledge into knowledge structures that already exist (e.g., CBT definition of automatic thoughts learned in the first stage). If given the space, learners make *observations* and *reflections* about the nature of their concrete experience. This ultimately allows them to transform the knowledge from concrete concepts into an applied model in the following stage.

Continuing with the previous example, the teacher in the counseling theories class may instruct the students to get into pairs or groups and discuss how each of the concepts within CBT fit together. The students could also be given an example case and asked to consider how CBT might be useful. Within that case, students might discuss the ABC model of thoughts, feelings, and behaviors and reflect on how each component of the model might apply to the case study. One student may have a better grasp of the material and by sharing their understanding provides the other group members an opportunity to observe this new material and reflect on how it fits with their current understanding. In this way, students are given the opportunity to reflect on their understanding of CBT and how it might apply in a clinical sense. In doing this, they will likely begin to weave this new understanding into their existing knowledge structures. Students may consider how the basic counseling skills (reflection, paraphrasing, etc.) look within CBT as compared to another theory. Students may also begin to reflect on intrapersonal concepts such as how well CBT might *fit* with them as an individual. Each of these reflective observations moves the student closer towards being able to work their knowledge theoretically.

Abstract Conceptualization

Next, learners arrive at the stage of *abstract conceptualization* where they begin to form their new knowledge and observations into a workable theory. In this process, students will integrate their previous knowledge with the knowledge they just gained to form more complex knowledge structures. In this way, students begin to build a theory of how preexisting knowledge (that which they understand and have been able to experiment with) with work with new knowledge (that which they do not yet fully understand and have not been able to experiment with). Kolb (1984) states that this theory is often immature and incomplete, but nonetheless it gives the learner a base from which to *experiment*. Continuing from before, students in the counseling theories class will have hopefully now arrived at a place where they understand the course content to the point where they can move beyond the concrete information originally presented to them and the reflective observation process that followed. As an example, they might have originally understood the affective, cognitive, and behavioral components of CBT to be three completely separate things, but through the processes of reflective observation (e.g., students might get into groups tasked with describing affective, behavioral, and cognitive components of a case study) and abstract conceptualization have come to believe that they each work together to support the other within a counseling relationship. This is the workable theory that will be tested in the next and final stage.

Active Experimentation

In the final stage, learners apply the cognitive model they created during abstract conceptualization in a practical way. In this, students “try out” their new knowledge in the real world and compare it with how they understand the world to work. Ideally, this results in a deeper understanding of something that was previously less understood and the ability to ask

deeper, more complex questions, thus restarting the cycle. For our example students, this might occur later in a practicum counseling setting where they begin to make connections between the thoughts, feelings, and behaviors of the client expressing a life transition. It could also occur within another classroom activity where the instructor asks the students to role play a counseling scenario. Importantly, the information gained from this hands on experimentation can serve as the catalyst that begins the experiential learning process again, albeit at a deeper level than before.

Summary

Professional identity development is a complex process, regardless of the unique professional position of the individual undergoing it. It is unique, though wrought with themes and patterns that can inform scholars, educators, and practitioners alike about the true nature of the process of developing as a professional.

The following chapter will detail the methodology that guides this study and explain the processes that will be used to select, recruit, and protect participants. In addition, data collection and analysis will be discussed.

Chapter 3: Methodology

The purpose of this study was to better understand the experiences of CEDS as they develop their identities as educators. The research questions that guided the pursuit of this understanding were:

1. What are the lived experiences of doctoral students in counselor education programs related to the development of their identities as teachers?
2. How do those experiences affect the development of their identities as teachers?

The proposed study is best suited for qualitative methodological approach based on the depth of understanding that can be achieved through qualitative methodology. A qualitative design is uniquely appropriate to answer the research questions posed by this study and to explore the experiences of CEDS as they grow in their identities as teachers.

Qualitative Research Design

Considering the research questions, qualitative research is a good fit for this study based on its ability to allow the participants to freely express themselves and help the researcher describe and understand the experiences of the participants. Qualitative research has a strong history within the social sciences because of its ability to provide a depth of understanding to issues unique to counseling and counselor education (Kline, 2008). Qualitative approaches posit that truth exists only as a relative point directly related to the experiences of an individual. Rejecting the positivist notion that truth is singular and finite, qualitative research instead asserts that knowledge is socially constructed and is informed as much by the individuals delivering the knowledge as the content of the knowledge itself (Merriam, 2002).

Important to the process of qualitative research are the paradigmatic assumptions of the researcher. These philosophical assertions lay the foundation for a variety of methodological approaches and distinguish qualitative work from its positivist counterparts (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). As the researcher, my beliefs about the nature of the study, the value of its results, and the processes by which individuals come to think of themselves as teachers are important considerations for myself and readers alike. Considering that, I will use the following sections to outline the ontological, epistemological, and philosophical beliefs that guide this study.

Ontology

Creswell (2003) defined ontology as an individual's thoughts on the nature of reality. Broadly, ontological assumptions fall into one of two categories: positivism and social constructivism (often referred to as interpretivism) (Bryman, 2016). Ontological positivism is predicated on the belief that reality is finite, knowable, and able to be understood to the extent that it can be measured. This paradigm most often informs quantitative approaches within the "hard" sciences where sizeable samples are used to make generalizations about even larger populations (Hatch, 2002; Lincoln et al., 2011). Conversely, ontological constructivism/interpretivism posits that reality is relative in nature and co-constructed by conscious actors through social interaction and intellectual conceptualization (Lincoln et al., 2011). Reality, instead of existing itself as a series of static objects, facts, and conditions waiting to be discovered, is instead constantly in the process of creation. Reality exists mainly as a social construction that is poorly defined by the concept of "truth" and better understood as the result of a social transaction than can be altered or changed in light of other realities or constructions (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

Considering that, my own ontological assumptions as the researcher are important related to research design and data analysis. This study is grounded in my ontological belief that knowledge is best understood in terms of meaning within social phenomena and we, as conscious actors, are limited by our attempts to explain and define knowledge concretely (Schwandt, 1994). I believe that humans are the constructors of knowledge and do so through meaningful social interactions that are informed by their own perceptions, beliefs, and values within the world (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). I align with Schwandt's (1994) description of constructivists which are individuals who, "are deeply committed to the contrary view that what we take to be objective knowledge and truth is the result of perspective. Knowledge and truth are created, not discovered by mind" (p. 236). These ontological foundations informed the process by which I interviewed participants and co-constructed meaning within their lived experiences as teachers.

Epistemology

Epistemology can be restated as "how we know what we know" (Creswell, 2003, p. 54). My epistemological perspective for this project stemmed from my own constructivist framework that asserts that meaning made of an experience serves as the basis for understanding of that experience and is ultimately a more valid epistemological approach than traditional positivist perspectives (Charmaz, 2006; Schwandt, 1994). A constructivist epistemological framework was well-aligned with the goal of this study. This type of framework was well-suited to the investigation of the lived experiences of students in the process of developing identities as teachers. Giving a constructive voice to these experiences was critical as it allowed me, as the researcher, to join with the participants and make meaning of their experiences, thus drawing closer to their true essence (Moustakas, 1994).

Following from the epistemological foundations of this study and my own beliefs about the nature of the reality, I placed a great value in securing the voice of the participant at the center of the study. To do this, it was important that I reflected on my own understanding of the research questions and how I have made meaning of my experiences as an educator (Creswell, 2009) and ensured that participants' voices are recorded in a way that allowed for a thick and rich description of the data (Saldaña, 2015). By doing so, I was intentional about staying aligned to the epistemological foundations of this study's design, elevating the level of rigor and trustworthiness in the data, and also revealing the experiences of the participants as the core of the findings.

Phenomenology

Phenomenological research is predicated on the belief that the meaning individuals make of their experiences is critical, and that this meaning is not built or constructed so much as it is reflexively discovered by the individual (Vagle, 2016). The purpose of this study was to engage with participants in a reflexive, phenomenological process whereby they may come to understand the significance of events related to their development as teachers. The significance, or essence, of these events is transformative for the participants and worthy of being understood in a more complete way (Merleau-Ponty, 1962; van Manen, 1990). The purpose of the following section is to review the relevant historical tenets of phenomenology and discuss the philosophical application of those tenets to this study.

Historical and Philosophical Tenets

The concept of essence is critical to the understanding of phenomenology. Husserl, who is most often credited with the creation of the phenomenological movement and considered by most to be the founder of phenomenology (van Manen, 2007) described the phenomenological

method as a process by which we are able to see, “[phenomena] in their unique *whatness* or essence without the customary attempts to reduce them to the smallest possible number, an attempt which can lead only to the impoverishment and falsification of the phenomena” (Spiegelberg, 2012, p. 194). Husserl was greatly influenced by the Cartesian stance on objective reality: that an object’s realness can only be objectively defined by its representation in thought (Moustakas, 1994). In other words, an individual’s perception or experience of an object is objectively true, unique to them, and superseding of abstract empirical truths not contained in thought. This influence ultimately led Husserl to coin the term *epoche*, a cognitive state where an individual may “set aside our prejudgments, biases, and preconceived notions about things” (Moustakas, 1994, p. 84). The state of *epoche* is more modernly thought of as bracketing and is central to the transcendental phenomenological research process.

Many other philosophers and scholars have added to or taken issue with Husserl’s phenomenological propositions, most notably Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty. Heidegger was an assistant of Husserl’s and served for a time as editor of his published lectures, eventually succeeding him as the chair of the University of Freiburg. Among other things, Heidegger took issue with Husserl’s notion of *epoche* and practice of bracketing, believing that objective description of an individual’s experience was impossible as all description is influenced by preconceived notions, beliefs, and assumptions (McConnell-Henry et al., 2009). Conversely, Heidegger posited that phenomenological investigators must instead move from description to interpretation whereby they assume full responsibility as members of a dynamic constructivist phenomenon. This interpretation focuses on being-in-the-world, as Heidegger suggested that interpreters cannot ever shed their prior understanding (i.e., bracket) and must instead use it as an ontological foundation upon which to construct novel understanding (Spiegelberg, 2012).

Merleau-Ponty borrowed from both of these frameworks in his own approach to phenomenology which is predicated on the belief that one's body is central to their experience in the world as the vehicle through which they may perceive their existence. Phenomenology of Perception (Merleau-Ponty, 1962) spoke primarily to the inseparability of the mind and body. This rejection of the Cartesian duality placed Merleau-Ponty as an ontological opponent of Husserl and in somewhat of a progressive stance when compared to Heidegger.

These historical tenets, though brief, are fundamentally important as they shed light on the assumptions that guide this study. This study is firmly rooted in the philosophical foundations of transcendental phenomenology. Given that, it will be important that I consider how I can constantly be striving for a state of *epoche* as I work to bracket my experiences related to education and identity development (Moustakas, 1994). In this, I will be able to accurately describe the experiences of the participants with intention, such that I can be conscious of my own cognitive contributions to the experience as separate from those of the participant (Husserl, 1931). Doing so will allow me to exercise the Transcendental-Phenomenological Reduction, which Moustakas (1994) described as a mindset where, "each experience is considered in its singularity, in and of itself. The phenomenon is perceived and described in its totality, in a fresh and open way" (p. 87). If the *epoche* is the key, then the Transcendental-Phenomenological Reduction is the door that becomes unlocked and the threshold that must be crossed. Considering each of these objectives, the approach as suggested by Moustakas (1994) is appropriate as its emphasis on *epoche*, description, and conscious intentionality are at the heart of Husserl's phenomenology. Both *epoche* and the Transcendental-Phenomenological Reduction require that the researcher engage in an intense process of self-reflection aimed at helping them to better understand their relationship to the study, its variables, and their personal motivations for

pursuing the creation of this particular knowledge. With that, the following section will discuss my positionality as the researcher.

Positionality of the Researcher

As a researcher involved in a qualitative study, it is important that I take time to consider my relationship to the study and the impact that might have on the process, the participants, and the results. Understanding my position relative to these variables and situating my awareness on their potential impact will help in guiding the focus towards the lived experiences of the participants (Moustakas, 1994). This is particularly difficult within the field of education where researchers often work and are influenced by the very same questions they seek to answer. To this point, as an educational researcher, it is more important that I take time to thoughtfully consider my own subjectivities before beginning the process of research (Peshkin, 1988).

Milner (2007) proposed a framework for researchers in education that seek to evaluate their position relative to their study which includes specific attention to, “researching the self, researching the self in relation to others, engaged reflection and representation, and shifting from the self to the system” (p. 388). These domains encompass attention to one’s own cultural and ethnic identities as well as towards the idea of how to best centralize the voice of the participants and minimize the voice of the researcher (Milner, 2007). For myself, this means recognizing my identities as a white, male, heterosexual doctoral student and the privileges inherent within that position. Acknowledgement of these privileges allows me to better position myself within the research process in such a way as to give the most strength to the voices of the participants while simultaneously acknowledging my role as the researcher and therefore as an instrument within the research itself (Finlay, 2011).

Recognition of my position within this research study begins with my thoughts on the role of teachers and the value of education. My mother, even though she was trained as a guidance counselor (now professional school counselor), largely thought of herself as an educator. The world of school counseling has changed dramatically in the past thirty years with many school counselors questioning their own professional identities and how they align along a spectrum that places mental health treatment and traditional education on opposing ends (DeKruyf et al., 2013). Growing up, I saw my mother wrestle with this transition and have felt that she never landed squarely in one camp or the other. This may be, perhaps, while I feel so passionately drawn to each position: mental health and education. From a professional identity standpoint, I identify primarily as a counselor and as a future counselor educator. The role of counselor educator encompasses several smaller roles, namely teacher (Dollarhide et al., 2013; Limberg et al., 2013), with which I also strongly identify. My own experiences in development as a teacher have been the primary motivating factors for this research project and the basis of my ongoing research agenda.

In a similar sense, I am privileged with an abundance of experience as a student and recognize, at least to some degree, the impact of those experiences on my development as an educator. I was fortunate to have had an entire cadre of teachers throughout my educational career that have instilled in me the value of learning and guided me towards perceiving myself as a life-long learner. Without those experiences and without the high value that I place in education and learning in general, I never would have finished college with any real plan thereafter, much less decided to continue towards my master's degree and eventually my PhD. My identity as a life-long learner inspires me to repay my educational debt, as it were, by working to inspire others towards becoming life-long learners through my role as an educator.

The next significant point in my development came during the first semester of my doctoral program. I was assigned to teach a course on life skills at the undergraduate level to students with intellectual and developmental disabilities in a post-secondary education program at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. This was my first formal introduction to the oft encouraged but rarely recited philosophy of, “if you can do it, you can teach it.” I knew how to plan a budget and research bus schedules. I knew basic principles of wellness, nutrition, and how to do my own laundry. I did not, however, have any idea how to be a teacher, and my first year as an educator helped me to understand the fundamental difference between knowing a thing and being able to teach it to others.

This understanding was further solidified when I entered into the first of my 100-hour teaching internships, as required by CACREP (2015). I enrolled as a co-instructor in a basic counseling skills class for masters-level counseling students. As a whole, the experience was a positive one, albeit less structured than I would have liked or was used to from my other internship experiences. In discussing my experiences teaching and developing my identity as an educator with my peers, I came to understand that our experiences varied widely. The overall educational benefit of the teaching experiences seemed to exist on a spectrum between *incredibly helpful* and *painfully frustrating*. This position seemed to be informed by several factors including number of doctoral-level co-instructors, subject of the course taught, style of the primary instructor, attention paid towards specific learning goals, and time spent among different teaching activities. This variety of experience was also consistent with the reports of Suddeath (2018) and Waalkes et al. (2018) who revealed that CEDS have inconsistent experiences related to teaching and can feel under supported, ill-prepared, and that their experiences teaching are often plagued by a lack of overall structure.

My own experiences as an educator, in tandem with the accounts on my peers and research I have read related to the topic, has led me to form several opinions that may impact that outcomes of this study. First, I openly value the pursuit of education and strongly believe that work as an educator of any sort is universally valuable and greatly needed. Second, while I believe that the most recent set of CACREP standards have done well to increase the rigor of educator preparation in accredited counselor education programs, I believe there is much more work that needs to be done. The amount of variability for CEDS during co-teaching experiences is a direct result of a lack of structure present in the current CACREP standards. This lack of structure directly limits the developmental impact of these co-teaching experiences and thus the students' effectiveness as teachers and further the development of their identities as teachers. Lastly, I believe this issue is of incredible importance as it has the potential to directly impact students at the masters and doctoral levels as well as the future generations of counselors and counselor educators.

I list these beliefs and values as an effort to reflexively consider my place within this project and the steps that must be taken to limit my effect on the results. This is difficult, as qualitative researchers often struggle with objectivity related to their own research (Hatch, 2002). Nevertheless, throughout this project I will use my skills as a reflexive researcher to consider how I may be mindful of my own biases and prejudices while also fully supporting the voices of my participants.

Method

Ethical methods of practice are one of the most important considerations for any researcher. To ensure these standards are met, this study was approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at the University of Tennessee prior to beginning recruitment. The

following section details the methods that accompanied this study including the process of selecting participants, offering informed consent, conducting interviews, and considerations related to rigor and trustworthiness.

Participant Recruitment Procedure

When describing the ideal participants for phenomenological research, Polkinghorne (1989) suggests that the researcher “gather a number of naïve descriptions from people who are having or have had the experience under investigation” (p. 46). In line with that suggestion, sampling for this project was purposeful in that the researcher intentionally solicited and selected individuals who were in the process of or recently had the experiences relevant to the study. A description of the study alongside a call for participants was posted on CESNET (Appendix A) a total of two times, four weeks apart. Snowball sampling aided participant recruitment as individuals who did not fit the study criteria forwarded the information on to colleagues or peers who did. Creswell (2013) noted the importance of sample size in qualitative research, suggesting no less than five participants. In addition to sample size, qualitative researchers must consider saturation of the data and ensure that enough participants have been interviewed so relationships among themes are well developed and consistent with the experiences of the participants (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). A total of 10 individuals were recruited through a combination of snowball sampling and exposure to the call for participants posted on CESNET.

An informed consent document was approved by the University of Tennessee, Knoxville IRB (Appendix B). Potential participants were given access to this document digitally through Google Drive by way of personal contact with me (snowball sampling) or as a link in the call for participants. Through the process of informed consent, participants had the ability to review the purpose of the study and any related risks before agreeing to participate. All

participants were advised that their participation was voluntary and that they could withdraw from the study at any point in time with no negative consequences to themselves. Participants were also informed that upon completion of at least one interview, they would be given a \$20 Amazon Gift card for participating. Before each interview, I made myself available to answer any questions related to their participation and ensure that each participant fully understood the nature of their consent.

Participants

Participants were CEDS who were enrolled in CACREP-accredited counselor education programs. All participants had completed at least one full academic year in their doctoral program and had participated in a supervised teaching experience in a CACREP-accredited program. To maximize diversity of the data and add a further element of rigor to the study, the researcher engaged in purposive sampling and selected no more than two participants from a given doctoral program. Participation was not limited by any other criteria.

Description of Participants

Table 1 lists basic demographic data and is followed by a brief description of each participant. This is done for the purpose of giving context to the primary themes. As they desired, participants either provided me with a chosen pseudonym or were given one by me.

Participant 1: Anika. Anika is a female who identifies as American Indian/Alaskan Native and is currently enrolled full time as a doctoral student. Like many of the participants, Anika is beyond her third year in her doctoral program and has been listed as the instructor or co-instructor for over five classes during the time in her doctoral program. Anika taught her first class online and described the trust that she felt from the faculty as surprising considering her lack of experience. She expressed disappointment as this experience and her next teaching

Table 1. *Participant Demographic Information*

Participant	Racial/Ethnic Identity	Gender	Year Within Program	ACES Region
Anika	American Indian/Alaskan Native	Female	Beyond third	WACES
Oliver	White	Male	Beyond third	SACES
Nala	White/Latinx	Female	Beyond third	NCACES
Bellini	White	Female	Beyond third	NRACES
Leo	White	Male	Third	RMACES
Cami	Black/African American	Female	Beyond third	NCACES
Eva	Latinx	Female	Beyond third	NCACES
Danny	Latinx	Male	Third	RMACES
Helen	White	Female	Third	SACES
Aaron	White	Male	Third	SACES

experience related to the lack of support that she received and equated it to “like drinking from a fire hose.” At the time, Anika was working a full-time job, enrolled as a full-time doctoral student, and teaching an online class for the first time as a solo instructor. Anika commented that this initial experience affected many of her thoughts related to subsequent teaching as she continued to move throughout her doctoral program.

Interestingly, Anika was primed to develop as a counselor educator by her professors in her master’s program. Though she was not able to engage in any direct teaching experience before her doctoral program, she was recognized for her clinical skills and strong leadership abilities. At the time, Anika did not feel that she wanted to teach and planned to use her training as a counselor educator to open a private practice and possibly consider teaching “on the side.” Anika was surprised to find that she enjoyed the work of teaching. The transition from imagining herself primary as a practitioner to pursuing a career as a counselor educator with the potential to work as a counselor on the side was one of the defining moments of her doctoral experience.

Participant 2: Oliver. Oliver is a White male who is currently enrolled full time and is beyond the third year in his doctoral program. Oliver has taught more than five classes while enrolled as a doctoral student with his first teaching experience being as an adjunct instructor in a psychology department soon after graduating with his master’s degree. Oliver was one of the few participants in this sample who entered their doctoral program with prior teaching experience and the only one who had taught college level courses prior to becoming a doctoral student. Within this role, Oliver was tasked with transitioning an in-person class to an online format in less than a week’s time. He described this process as “pretty intimidating” but gave credit to his own master’s program and the fact that it was fully online for preparing him with an understanding of the nuances of online education.

As a doctoral student, Oliver was presented with opportunities to teach in-person and reflected heavily on his time working as a counselor and how that prepared him to develop as a teacher. Oliver commented that while co-teaching a class on counseling families, children, and adolescents, he was better able to focus on the needs of the students and his own development as a teacher because of his prior clinical experience working with children and families. After he graduates, Oliver plans to pursue a career as a counselor educator.

Participant 3: Nala. Nala is a full time, female doctoral student who identifies as both White and Latinx. She has been in her doctoral program for over three years and had the opportunity to teach more than five classes as a primary instructor or a co-instructor. Nala remarked that she felt that she was fortunate to have the opportunity to co-teach early in her doctoral program (during her second semester) and also while taking a class within her program related to developing skills as a teacher. Nala stated that in her program, doctoral students were typically placed in internships after they had completed their coursework during the first two years.

More than other factors, Nala's identity as a teacher seemed to be influenced by the multiple roles she found herself in and the challenges she was presented with navigating dual relationships, a common issue for doctoral students in counselor education (Limberg et al., 2013). Nala had the experience of serving as a co-instructor for a master's level course that was being taken by one of the doctoral students in her cohort. She described this as simultaneously anxiety provoking and enlightening. She felt much more comfortable asking for, receiving, and trusting feedback from her peer than she did from either the students or her supervising instructor.

Along with several other participants, Nala commented extensively on the effect of her racial/ethnic identities and how that influenced her growth as a teacher. Nala experienced a notable difference teaching alongside another female counselor educator who identified as Black as compared to other members of her faculty who did not identify as persons of color.

Participant 4: Bellini. Bellini is a full time, White female doctoral student who is beyond the third year in her program. While enrolled, she has taught four classes as either a co-instructor or a primary instructor. Before entering her master's program, Bellini worked as a preschool teacher and stated that, "actually, I hated it." Additionally, she also had some experience teaching middle and high school students. She commented that being in this type of learning environment was what led her to her to pursue her master's degree because as a preschool teacher, "[she] couldn't focus on building relationships or building meaningful connections with people like you can as a counselor or supervisor."

After her master's program, Bellini entered directly into her doctoral program. She was surprised to find that she was the only person in her cohort who had any direct teaching experience. Moreover, she reflected on the fact that for her, this didn't change much of how she felt about herself as an instructor. Bellini still struggled initially to understand herself as an instructor and dealt with feelings of anxiety, being overwhelmed, and feeling like an imposter.

During her time as a doctoral student, one of the things that impacted Bellini most has been her observations of the interpersonal dynamics of her faculty. Bellini described it as a "toxic" environment where "these people who are leaders in the field are constantly tearing into each other and being disrespectful." Due to the nature of this environment, Bellini took a break from teaching and investigated career paths that would lead her away from a tenure-track path. Ultimately, she took some time away from her department and realized how much she missed

getting to teach. She has since decided that she again wants to pursue a tenure-track position and is currently investigating opportunities in that area.

Participant 5: Leo. Leo is a White male who is currently enrolled full time in his doctoral program. He is in his third year and during his time as a doctoral student has taught more than five courses as a solo instructor or co-instructor. After graduating with his Bachelor's in Psychology, Leo had the opportunity to jump straight into teaching while working as a teaching assistant in the same program from which he had just graduated. In this role, Leo helped to teach introductory psychology courses to undergraduate students. Leo commented that while he enjoyed this position, in this role he felt that there, "wasn't enough direct counseling, nor teaching, really." Several faculty members noticed that Leo had inherent skills as a teacher and recommended that he pursue his master's in counseling. He did so and after graduating went straight through to his doctoral program.

Leo stated that within his doctoral program, he has been most influenced by his mentors who were intentional in trying to help him blend technique and theory. He described it as a journey, commenting on how he came into the program with some degree of practical teaching experience but with, "very little actual theory to back up what [he] was doing." Leo also commented that, strangely, his previous teaching experiences also hampered him in some regards. He recalled his first formal teaching experience where he was paired with another doctoral student (who had no previous teaching experience) and a faculty co-instructor. Due to the difference in developmental levels and the formation of their identities as teachers, the faculty co-instructor felt led to cater to the less experienced member of the group. Leo stated that he understood, but felt that he was held back some and received less attention than he would have liked.

Despite that, Leo felt that the mentorship he received was the most important part of the growth of his identity as a teacher. Moving forward, he is planning to pursue a career as a tenure-track counselor educator.

Participant 6: Cami. Cami is a Black female and the only participant who was not enrolled as a full-time student. Cami is beyond the third year in her doctoral program and has taught two courses while enrolled as either an instructor or co-instructor. Cami graduated with her master's degree from the same program in which she is currently enrolled as a doctoral student and commented that this familiarity was very helpful for her in the development of her identity as a teacher. At the same time, she commented that this also presented some difficulties for her. At times, she worried that the faculty members wouldn't be able to see her as a counselor educator, or even as a doctoral student, and would only ever see her as a promising master's student. Fortunately, she was able to receive supervision and feedback related to these fears and was ultimately awarded a college-level award for graduate teaching.

In addition to her accolades, Cami also experienced some struggles. She recalled that despite receiving an award for teaching, she was denied certain opportunities to teach within her program in favor of other students. Cami stated that because she is a Black female, certain members of her faculty assumed that she would be more interested in teaching courses in multicultural counseling and was thus passed for considerations for other courses. In addition, she was frequently advised to, "speak up and be firm" from her White, male supervisors despite being afraid of being perceived as aggressive. In describing the importance of teaching evaluations for counselor educators applying for tenure-track positions, she expressed a great deal of concern that as a Black woman, she would be perceived in such a way as to negatively

impact her future. While she did receive support with this concern, it was primarily from faculty members who were either Black or female and left her feeling invalidated, at times.

Cami felt fortunate to have received an assistantship outside her program but wondered how she might have benefited had she been able to secure one of the coveted spots within her program. She expressed frustration that those spots often seemed to go to the same individuals, none of which looked like her. In addition, she commented that she would have liked more balanced feedback from her supervisors, commenting, “Yes, we can talk about how I can grow and that’s great, but what did I do well? Build me up.”

Participant 7: Eva. Eva is a full time, Latinx female doctoral student who is beyond the third year in her doctoral program. As a doctoral student, Eva has been a part of more than five classes as an instructor or co-instructor. Eva credits her mentors for their roles throughout her teacher identity development, especially in the beginning. As a master’s student, Eva made it clear that she intended to pursue a doctoral degree and was thus given opportunities to teach and lead classes. This type of intentional, personal investment helped her to feel like she could be successful as a doctoral student and counselor educator.

Upon entering her doctoral program, Eva was given a teaching assistantship her first semester and immediately thrust into the opportunity to begin teaching again. Early on she was asked to teach, grade, and work directly with students, but commented that she didn’t actually feel “like a teacher” until she was asked to meet individually with a student to discuss their lack of progress in the class. She described this process as intimidating and was struck by the reality of the fact that the student might pass the class and that she bore some responsibility for helping them. With this experience she realized, “I’m teaching, this is what it’s going to be like.”

Like many of the experiences shared by the participant group as a whole, this experience was very much a double-edged sword. Eva admits that ultimately it helped her to grow, but laments that she was not supported the way that she would have liked to have been and just told to do it without any preparation. Eva was overwhelmed by the student who started to cry, became upset, and yelled at her. When she reported this to her supervisor, her impression was that, “he took it lightly, but it didn’t feel like a light situation to me.”

Much like Cami, Eva’s experiences of support from her faculty wavered at times. While very few participants described interactions that were openly hostile, Eva described a situation she encountered while taking a course on teaching within her department that left her feeling discouraged. Eva, alongside two of her peers who were also people of color, met with the faculty member teaching the course to discuss one of the textbooks and the fact they they were struggling to feel like it was culturally relevant to them. Upon hearing that, the faculty member immediately disregarded the text, promised to not use it the following semester, and ended the meeting. Eva expressed that this was not what she was looking for and instead would have liked to have had a discussion and been given the opportunity to feel heard.

Participant 8: Danny. Danny is a Latinx male who is enrolled as a full time student in his doctoral program. He is in his third year and has co-taught one class as a doctoral student. Danny remarked on how he didn’t personally start to consider his identity as a teacher until he took an instructional theory course within his program. Afterwards, he began teaching as a co-instructor during an internship experience and was struck by the nature of his development saying, “it’s real now. Like, now you’re on a journey that doesn’t end.”

For Danny, a big part of this journey has been integrating his new identity as a teacher with his identity as a person of color. In particular, Danny draws on texts like *Pedagogy of the*

Oppressed and others that have led him to feel more represented in the realms of teaching and education. Relatedly, Danny described one interaction with a student of his who was also a person of color. She asked to speak with him after class and made a note to share with him how much it meant to her that she was able to learn from another person of color and that he was the first non-White instructor she had experienced between her Bachelor's degree and master's program.

Succinctly, Danny's journey so far as a teacher is well summarized by his statement that: "I've had the experience of being marginalized and of being oppressed. And so I want to, in my role as a teacher, I want to be representative of other students who might have experienced that as well."

Participant 9: Helen. Helen is a full time, White female doctoral student who is currently in the third year of her program. While enrolled as a doctoral student, Helen has taught three classes as either the sole instructor or as a co-instructor. Before entering her doctoral program, Helen worked as a practitioner in an inpatient psychiatric facility. She worked mostly with groups and was proud of the work she did rewriting the facility's procedural manual for process groups for current patients. Helen credits her licensure supervisor as the individual who most influenced her towards pursuing her doctoral degree.

Once enrolled in her doctoral program, Helen has her first experience as a teacher working as a co-instructor in a counseling skills class during one of her first internships. Helen described this experience as, "building up the courage to talk in front of a group of people who were supposed to be learning from me." She characterized much of her time during that first internship as being more of a "follower, not a leader", but was proud of the fact that by the end of the semester she had taught two entire class periods on her own. Helen noted that the next

semester during her second teaching internship she found herself developing much more as a teacher. She was tasked with grading papers, assignments, teaching more frequently, and meeting with students. These tasks helped her to begin to solidify her identity as a teacher. In a very stepwise fashion, the following semester Helen had the opportunity to teach as a sole instructor and commented that her identity as a teacher “grew exponentially.” Helen was surprised at that and also at the amount that she has come to identify with the role of teacher. She is planning to pursue a career as a counselor educator and is also open to returning to work as a practitioner.

Participant 10: Aaron. Aaron is a full time, White male doctoral student who is currently in the third year of his program. As a doctoral student, Aaron has taught four classes as a primary instructor or co-instructor. In reflecting about the development of his identity as a teacher, Aaron recalled a number of salient experiences including one in which he was teaching a class period alone during his second semester teaching. During this class he noted tension and frustration from the students and found himself able to give them space to share, vent, and be heard. Afterwards, he noticed a visible shift in mood and engagement and realized, “like, I got them there. Holy crap, I can do this.”

Interestingly, for Aaron it appeared that this feeling of efficacy or strength in his identity as a teacher was dependent upon the state of the classroom. He shared that later on that semester while presenting he found himself in an awkward position where he was unsure of how to move forward with his lesson. The students were looking at him, he couldn’t remember his slides, his co-instructor was not present and suddenly, “now I don’t feel like a teacher anymore.”

Also in tandem with other participants in this study, Aaron commented that his course on teaching, while helpful, was mostly geared towards skills and that he felt it was lacking in

helping him to develop his identity as a teacher. Comparing it to his identity as a supervisor, he stated that he was routinely asked, “So, who are you as a supervisor? What does it mean for *you* to be a supervisor?” But as a teacher, his experience was more of, “Here is how to construct a syllabus. Here is how to create a lesson plan.” While the skill-based learning was there, Aaron felt that he struggled to receive the external validation that is needed for CEDS to progress in their understanding of their professional identities (Limberg et al., 2014). He summarized this by saying, “The next step is diving into being a full-time primary instructor rather than just co-teaching with someone else, but I feel like I need guidance and help. I don’t know that I’ve found that.”

Summary of Participants

As a whole, participants were consistent in their descriptions of a number of salient experiences related to the development of their identities as teachers. Moreover, many of the themes are consistent with the available literature on professional identity development for CEDS (Gibson et al., 2014; Limberg et al., 2014, Woo et al., 2017). This presents strong parallels between that broader view of professional identity development (as counselor education doctoral students, or doctoral students) and the more narrow, faceted approach taken within this study (as teachers, specifically). Parallels included the importance of mentorship, a sense of ever-present imposter syndrome, a struggle between independence and co-dependence with supervisors, and the importance of external validation.

Other findings were present in the data that were also consistent between participants but more unique to the development of their identities as teachers as opposed to their more generalized development as doctoral students or counselor educators. These findings included a sense of self-efficacy as a teacher that was directly related to experience working as a counselor,

frustration at the competitiveness of securing opportunities to teach or co-teach, and the difficulties faced by students of color when teaching in primarily White classrooms or with supervisors and peers who are also primarily White. These themes are clarified and supported by individual participant experiences in the following chapter.

Data Collection Methods

Polkinghorne (1989) identified the interview as the preferred method of data collection within phenomenological research and noted several important characteristics including a focus on creating a conversation with the participant, acknowledging the researchers' involvement while maintaining focus on the experience of the participant, and focusing responses to contribute to themes that emerge among all of the participants. Phenomenological interviews often begin by asking a pair of broad questions or prompts designed to elicit the experience of the participant without leading them to feel pressured to speak about any one specific thing (Creswell, 2012; Moustakas, 1994).

A pilot study was used for this project and preceded the participant interviews. The researcher interviewed two participants before initial data collection with the purpose of refining the interview protocol alongside the interview guide (Appendix C). The interviewer conducted the pilot interviews using the same procedures and methods as intended for the participant interviews. After each pilot interview, the researcher solicited the opinion of the pilot participant on how the interview experience could have been improved for them. Based on participant responses, both in response to the interview questions and as feedback after the interview, the researcher adjusted the interview protocol to better match this study's objectives. After completion of the two pilot interviews, minimal changes were made to the interview protocol.

After the pilot interviews were completed, regular interviews began. Participants were asked to participate in two interviews lasting approximately 45 minutes each. The purpose of the first interview was to build rapport and focus on the first four questions listed in the interview guide (Appendix C):

1. At what point did you begin considering yourself as a teacher?
2. Tell me about your first teaching experience.
 - a. What was memorable about it?
 - b. What feelings were present then?
 - c. What feelings are present now, as you recall it?
3. What experience most positively influenced your teacher identity development?
4. What experiences most negatively influenced your teacher identity development?

Each of the first interviews lasted the full 45 minutes. At the end of the first interview participants were asked to schedule a follow-up interview. The researcher also confirmed each participant's email address in order that he could send the \$20 Amazon gift card.

The purpose of the second interview was to asking the remaining three questions while also allowing room for the participant to add anything that may have occurred to them after reflecting on the first interview:

5. What is the most memorable experience you have while working as a teacher?
 - a. Why is that experience so memorable?
 - b. Do you feel that experience contributed to your development as a teacher, and if so, how?
6. How is your teacher identity development supported in your doctoral program?
7. Is there anything else that you would like to share about your experience as a teacher?

Each of the second interviews lasted an average of approximately 40 minutes with most interviews going the full 45 minutes and two interviews ending early. At the end of the second interview participants were thanked for their time. I ensured that each participant was willing to receive a copy of initial findings for the purposes of member checking. Each participant consented to this.

Interviews were conducted using video conferencing software (e.g., Zoom). All sessions were audio and video recorded, transcribed, and manually checked for accuracy. All data, information, and documentation related to this project was received and stored digitally and securely in a password protected folder on the researcher's personal computer. Digital and paper records of this study will be destroyed by the research three years after the study is concluded.

Data Analysis and Procedures

The goal of data analysis within transcendental phenomenological research is to establish the true essence of a particular experience by building textural and structural descriptions (Moustakas, 1994). Moustakas (1994) defines textural descriptions as a thick and rich narrative that describes *what* the participant is experiencing. In contrast, structural descriptions are thought of as *how* a participant encounters a particular experience. Together, these descriptions reveal the true essence of the phenomenon under investigation (Creswell, 2013; Moustakas, 1994).

Moustakas (1994) outlined the process of arriving at the true essence of a phenomenon through phenomenological research in detail and provided a framework that will guide the analysis within this study. He outlined seven essential steps, noting that researchers:

1. Should consider a topic that has significant personal meaning to them as well as something that has significance within their larger social structure.

2. Must provide evidence that they have a thorough understanding of the related literature by completing a detailed literature review.
3. Should thoughtfully consider criteria for other researchers involved in the project.
4. Maintain appropriate ethical standards of research through the use of informed consent and practices related to privacy and confidentiality.
5. Create a guide or set of questions to progress through the interview.
6. Should host individual interviews focused on the topic of interest while working to maintain a bracketed state.
7. Structure data such that it can be analyzed to best develop themes and meaning that progress the researcher towards obtaining a better understanding of the textural and structural descriptions of the phenomena.

Coding

Hatch (2002) described the process of qualitative data analysis as one of interpretation and states that, “it’s about making inferences, developing insights, attaching significance, refining understandings, drawing conclusions, and extrapolating lenses” (p. 180). This process involves the breadth of the phenomenological research process but is centered about data analysis and coding. Related to structures of coding qualitative data, I followed Saldaña (2015). This process began immediately after data collection when I reviewed each transcript for accuracy. I listened to the recorded audio of each interview while simultaneously reading through the transcript to correct for any errors in transcription. This was done throughout the data collection process and normally occurred immediately after the completion of each interview.

Once the final interview was completed, I began to engage in the process of horizontalization whereby I read through transcripts of each interview. I utilized In Vivo coding (Saldaña, 2015) by gathering samples of the participants' direct quotes that were significant and relevant to the objectives of the study. This resulted in approximately twenty pages of initial codes, a sample of which are listed in Appendix D. Next, assuming all statements as equally valuable to the research process, I eliminated statements that were redundant or unrelated to the topic, thus allowing me to group the remaining statements into themes (Moustakas, 1994; Saldaña, 2015). This resulted in the emergence of each of the themes, both primary themes and subthemes, which were later organized by their frequency within the data and their relevance to the experiences of the participants. At this point, initial themes were emailed to participants for the purposes of member checking. Participants were asked to review the initial themes and provide any feedback they wished. I received responses from two participants and both responses indicated I had accurately understood and portrayed the participants' experiences.

An example of this process is as follows and is presented in **Table 2**: The first interview with Helen resulted in the following three en vivo codes: (1) "pretty big responsibility," (2) "responsible for these students," and (3) "supposed to be learning from me." Nala's first interview produced somewhat similar codes: (1) "I can't trust their feedback," "I really don't know this," and "how does this work?" Eva's first interview supported the development of these themes as well with the initial codes: "I didn't feel backed up," "There were no positive feelings," and "they're going to see right through me."

These initial codes, among others gathered from participant interviews, were collapsed into the general theme of "responsibility for students' success," "the imposter monster," and "self-doubt." These themes were gathered across participants and each represented the various

Table 2. Example of the Coding Process

Initial Codes	Collapsed Codes	Final Themes
pretty big responsibility	Responsibility for students' success	I'm responsible
responsible for these students	Imposter monster	I'm an imposter
supposed to be learning from me	Self-doubt	
I can't trust their feedback		
I really don't know this		
how does this work?		
I didn't feel backed up		
There were no positive feelings		
they're going to see right through me		

struggles they felt when working as teachers. These struggles ranged from self-critical thoughts to paranoia related to receiving positive feedback from students. Despite that range, each of these themes were related in that they were associated with the participant's level of confidence and how that led them to interpret a particular situation.

After I further immersed myself in the data and gained a fuller, richer understanding of the true essence of the participants' experiences, I refined these into the subthemes of "I'm responsible" and "I'm an imposter" under the primary theme of Confidence, or lack thereof.

As noted by Moustakas (1994), at this point in the analysis, I had developed a rich enough understanding of the phenomenon to construct a textural and structural description of it, the synthesis of which resulted in a description of its true essence. From this understanding, I was able to properly organize the themes into primary themes and related subthemes in accordance with their prevalence within the data and impact of the participants' development as teachers. Saturation of the data was achieved when I was able to read through original transcripts of participant interviews and contribute nothing else to the participants' experiences else what was already present in the emergent themes.

Establishing Credibility and Trustworthiness

Qualitative researchers are tasked with obtaining and analyzing data in such a way as to accurately capture and express the voices of their participants. Procedures related to credibility and trustworthiness increase the likelihood of this outcome and are essential within qualitative research (Guba & Lincoln, 1985; Kline, 2008). Creswell (2009) suggested several procedures to enhance rigor and trustworthiness that were utilized within this study. First, I was mindful of the relationship that I hold to the study and its objectives. I acknowledged my place as an instrument within the research and as a member of a group whose objective is to shed light on the

experiences of participants. To accomplish this, I kept continuous memos and journals of my experiences, a process which helped me remain aware and stay objective, yet connected (Birks et al., 2008; Merriam, 2002). Before each interview, I was intentional with the use of bracketing, putting aside any preconceived notions, judgements, or assumptions about the topic at hand (Moustakas, 1994). Creswell (2009) noted the importance of member-checking. After transcripts were initially analyzed and themes began to emerge, I sent preliminary findings back to participants to determine if they felt their voices and experiences were accurately represented in the findings. As mentioned, responses were received from two participants that both indicated that the initial findings were representative of their experiences. By revisiting the data in this way, I more completely honored the experiences of the participants and more accurately described their lived experiences (Guba & Lincoln, 1985).

Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to provide an overview of the methodological considerations of this study and to demonstrate the procedures related to participant recruitment, data collection, and analysis. Support was established for a transcendental phenomenological approach based on the framework established by Moustakas (1994). My positionality as the researcher was discussed in such a way as to reflect the intention with which I approach my own contributions, overt and covert, to this study. Last, specific methods of data analysis were discussed alongside procedures for establishing credibility and trustworthiness.

Chapter 4: Findings

This study was designed to investigate the teacher identity development of doctoral students in counselor education programs. This process was guided by two primary research questions:

1. What are the lived experiences of doctoral students in counselor education programs related to the development of their identity as a teacher?
2. How do those experiences affect the development of their identities as teachers?

Chapter four presents the results from the analysis of data gathered from 10 participants through semi structured interviews. Ultimately, this process of phenomenological reduction resulted in the emergence of four primary themes alongside several smaller subthemes. Each of the primary themes was present across the data and are discussed in detail in the following sections.

Description of Themes: Developing an Identity as a Teacher

Using the process described in Chapter Three, analysis of the data resulted in the emergence of three primary themes that included (1) Connection, (2) Confidence, or lack thereof, and (3) Who am I, who are you? From these primary themes emerged several sub-themes that are described below.

Theme 1: Connection

Connection was experienced as a significant bond with a person or group of people that helped a participant feel safe enough to explore an identity they were not completely comfortable in. Smaller sub-themes that were a part of this process included participants' journey to their inner world and the importance of validation, feedback, and support.

Each participant in this study described the effects of mentorship on the development of their identities as teachers. Importantly, participants in this study described a broader range of

experience within the realm of mentorship. Specifically, participants felt mentored by their co-instructors, faculty from their master's program, and/or peers. Styles of mentorship were varied and depended largely on the individual mentoring and the culture of the program of study. Some students even began their journeys in mentorship as master's level students, or as Leo described it:

So [mentorship], it's a thread that can't be taken away from the narrative of me being an educator. So, I taught undergrad classes as part of my group class and the requirement for CACREP. I got more of that developmental mentorship like, "Hey, this is how undergrads work differently." That mentorship helped me understand the theory through the practical lens. And now, in my PhD program, it's been kind of hemming those two together neatly: both getting mentorship and learning how to be a mentor myself.

Leo had the rare opportunity of beginning his development as a teacher while still a student in his master's program. A mentor helped him to understand himself in this new role, consider what it meant for his own development, and then prepare him to integrate this understanding with what he would learn about teaching and mentorship as a doctoral student.

Eva also shared how a faculty member invested in her personally and how she felt more Connected as a result. She detailed how her mentor and other faculty members of color helped her to feel personally supported and valued as a Latinx women in her doctoral program:

I was the only student as the time from out of state, like from across the country. I was like 30 hours away from home, so I couldn't just drive over. So, [my mentors] provided me a lot of extra support... I was invited to a mentorship group with the three professors of color in my department.

Not only did this help Eva to feel Connected to her program, but she was also introduced to a group that allowed her the opportunity to further Connect to other persons of color working in her department.

Danny also shared his experiences of Connection, specific to working with members of his doctoral cohort:

You know, often times I feel like my peers played a bigger role than my mentors because when we co-teach, they're just so creative. Sometimes I wish I was more creative, but really I am just in awe of my peers. I'm like, y'all are really killing it out here. I loved seeing that. So just learning from their lectures, seeing their creativity, it's a huge piece a really try to draw from.

By observing his peers, Danny felt Connected to them in the sense that he was able to learn from this. He respected them, valued their work, and even drove himself to emulate them in their successes.

Participants also experienced Connection to their faculty co-instructors. Multiple participants shared experiences of receiving critical feedback from a co-instructor and the effect that had on them. Interestingly, participants' reactions to these experiences varied greatly depending on their perceived Connection to their co-instructor. For example, each participant, no matter the ways in which they felt Connected, shared that this was uncomfortable. Likewise, they each shared the impact of this on their development as a teacher. Interestingly, *how* this was impactful, or rather the *meaning* that was made, was dependent upon whether the participant had identified a source of Connection. Those who felt a strong sense of Connection with a peer or mentor were able to persist in a way that allowed them to recognize the value of the experience

upon reflection and consideration. Oliver stated this idea well. In referencing his peers, he mentioned:

...But just the fact that they've made mistakes and that if I go to them and I'm like, "Okay, I don't know what to do here." And there's just that support, because they can empathize and relate to it. I never go to these people thinking they're going to tell me I've done something horribly wrong and I'm like terrible at my job.

Those who did not feel Connected struggled to ground their feelings of shame or anxiety in the support or feedback of another individual and were thus less likely to consolidate a positive understanding of the experience.

Inner world

The subtheme of the inner world emerged from data early in the analysis and was consistently present among participants as they described their experiences becoming teachers and interacting with supervisors, co-instructors, peers, and students. As they were developing their identities as teachers, participants were constantly at work within their own minds and hearts trying to decipher messages from themselves about their worth, efficacy, and value to their students. Early in their teacher identity development, the contents of this inner world were often critical and sometimes even self-defeating. Despite that, as they progressed in their understanding of themselves as teachers and grew in their relationships with their mentors and role models, those messages tended to be more positive. Helen, reflecting on her third teaching experience and second time as a solo instructor, put it very succinctly when she said, "I can do this. I can do it again. This is my life now." In contrast to this level of confidence and self-efficacy, Helen began her development in a place of self-doubt, anxiety, and fear:

So my first teaching experience was all about building up the courage to talk in front of a group of people who were supposed to be learning from me. It was this huge responsibility... The first time I actually stood up and taught I had all this sweat dripping off my face and my back because of how anxious I was... I felt like the center of attention and that was not something I was used to or comfortable with.

Aaron's inner world began as one that was busy to the point that he struggled to stay present in the moment and had to fight off his own self-doubt.

I was just constantly on the verge of being overwhelmed and I was hyper aware of everything I was doing wrong. I had very little ability to consider what the classes' experience was. That was very overwhelming because I was just so certain that I had messed something up, and in that anxiety I kept forgetting what I was supposed to be doing. Like, I had notes within my PowerPoint and I just kept forgetting to read them.

Bellini had a different experience where she was able to take her perceived failures and use them as ammunition to positively influence her inner world.

I can remember some instances too where I had like clear failures of teaching, which were really discouraging. However, they also demonstrated to me that you can always live to see another day... Like in teaching if you have one bad class it doesn't mean it's always going to be that way.

The types of messages that participants endorsed within their inner worlds were directly tied to the content of the messages they were receiving from the outside. When they felt connected to their students and supervisors, the participants were much more likely to engage in positive-self-talk and build themselves up. In contrast, when that connection was ruptured or taken advantage

of, most participants developed barriers that isolated them and darkened the content of their inner worlds. Leo remembered it like this:

I was definitely hindered by having master's students in the hallway telling me this was their least favorite class. They openly said those things and it showed. I remember coming home and being like, why the hell am I doing this counselor education thing? This does not make sense.

Leo felt that his connection to his students was lacking and this in turn caused him a lot of pain. He doubted his effectiveness as a teacher. Fortunately, he was a part of a larger community in which he was able to receive the support he needed to take the messages in stride, ultimately consolidating that, "So, I guess it hinders me more in the short-term, there's lessons to be learned from it. It only hinders me if I don't reengage with it... Maybe I'm just not in a place to learn this yet."

This is contrasted by Helen who described being very Connected to her peers and co-instructors and using their comments as encouragement for herself:

But one of the running themes across this experience is this support. I'm being told I'm doing a good job. For who I am personally, having that validation, that support and encouragement that you can do this; that's probably what propelled me further than if I hadn't had people who'd invested in me.

Leo and Helen shared in an experience where they received feedback related to their identities as teachers. Helen's sense of Connection helped her to better internalize the feedback and incorporate it into her identity as a teacher. Leo's lack of Connection at the time led him to take comments about his class personally and struggle with the feeling that they reflected poorly on

himself as a teacher. The difference here is at the core at the importance of Connection and consistent through the experiences of each of the participants.

Support

The community that Leo found himself a part of was invaluable to his success as a teacher and the progress he made in the development of his identity as a teacher. The availability of this type of support, or lack thereof in some cases, was influential for every participant within this study. For some, the support they received allowed them to gain a better understanding of the fundamental skills of teaching and work to integrate those into their understanding of who they were as a teacher. Bellini commented, for instance:

And I think that the support [my mentor] gave me really promoted my growth. She would debrief with me before the beginning of each class and would explain to me how she approached different topics... She supported me in reminding me that I should take up space in the conversation. It was just like, really the amount of attention. Like, she took it really seriously... At the end I knew that I earned those hours and got a tremendous amount out of it.

Bellini's experience was so influential for her growth due to the fact that her mentor was intentional about attending to both her skills and her identity as a teacher. Bellini was guided on how to approach certain subjects within the curriculum while also being led to think of herself as worthy of taking up space in the classroom. Moreover, she was struck by her impression that her mentor "took it really seriously." In this, she got the message that her development was worth the attention and effort of her mentor and not considered an afterthought.

Leo had a similar experience in which he was led to consider how he would approach a situation across multiple identities:

Like I got the crap challenged out of my by the professor I am currently teaching with, early on. She was like, you say you're this person but you're doing these different things. How does this align? I noticed you doing something different in supervision. And that was helpful because it helped me nurture myself as an Adlerian.

Again, it was impactful for the student in this situation that their mentor was intentional and observant enough to be able to recognize subtle differences in how they presented themselves in different environments. Not only did this help Leo to grow in his awareness of his identity as a teacher, but the interpersonal message was clear: *Oh, you care enough to notice.*

From the beginning of her teacher identity development, Cami was encouraged to reflect on who she was as a teacher and incorporate that into her practice of teaching:

So, they trusted the decisions I was making. I'm teaching this very structured way; like, this is who I am and this is why I want to do it. Them trusting my approach and my reasons behind it was a big thing... It goes back to, like, this is who I am. They accepted me for that.

Similar to Leo, Cami felt that who she was as an individual was supported. She had the understanding that her mentors were there to support the development of her *identity* as a teacher, not just her *skills* in teaching.

While the presence of this type of support was fundamental to the process of identity development for most participants, its absence was also noted. Nala vividly described a situation in which she was told by a member of her faculty and co-instructor that the class they were teaching together was best taught "more experientially and with like no lecture, less didactically." Being early in her development as a teacher, this was more difficult for Nala, but she consented as a means to please her faculty member. On one occasion, the co-instructor was

absent and Nala was teaching alone. She came to realize that her students did not do the assigned reading and were struggling in the class discussion. Nala made the decision to transition the class to a lecture to catch the students up on what was contained in the reading. The professor arrived at the class and later shared her frustrations that Nala was lecturing. Nala tried to explain her reasoning and was rejected. As Nala put it:

So I just kind of felt like they didn't get it. And at the end of the summer they were like, you know, I'm not really sure if I feel like you're ready to have your own class at this point. And she just kept going back to that one lesson... And in the moment I just felt really unsupported, like, I'm being punished because you just don't get it.

Nala went on to explain how that faculty member had a say in the assigning of assistantships for doctoral students and that Nala was later passed over for an opportunity that would allow her to teach as a solo instructor. Due to the structuring of her program, at the end of her first year in the program, Nala saw no opportunities for her to teach as a solo instructor within her program, something she felt was going to greatly impact her ability to get a job after graduation. She experienced some bitterness and resigned that, "I guess I'll just have to craft my own learning."

When offered support, students felt safe and encouraged to make mistakes. In turn, this allowed them more freedom to experiment and gain a greater understanding of themselves as teachers in addition to a higher degree of competency with their skills. As a whole, this was largely framed by the connection that developed between student and mentor. In contrast, when support was not offered or conditional in nature, it limited the potential for the development of this type of connection and thus the building of trust between the student and mentor. Instead of drawing towards, students pushed away. Instead of feeling invited in, students experienced being excluded and isolated.

Validation

As a concept, validation is far from unique as it's related to findings concerning identity development for doctoral students. For participants within this study, receiving validation was a graduated process that began externally and transitioned internally over time and with experience.

In contrast to parallel findings such as these, there were patterns that emerged within the data that were unique to the process of teacher identity development. For instance, while previous research has highlighted the impact of validation received from supervisors and peers, participants in this study almost unanimously spoke to the importance of validation received from the students they taught. Anika shared:

...but what I remember most was [my co-instructor] coming back with my [student evaluations] and I was like, oh no, these learners, they knew I didn't know what I was doing. They're going to eviscerate me on the rating scale. And then, um, I got like a perfect score. They'd never had anyone do that in their first quarter. Everyone was asking me, 'what did you guys do?' and 'what was different?' It was so affirming, like, hey, I did this right. You know? Like, if I actually get good at it, this could be something, something powerful.

Helen was able to begin thinking of herself as a teacher after being recognized as such by students she was teaching and grading:

That semester, I had seven students I was grading for the entire semester. And they referred to me as their teacher, as their professor. And so I think having them give me that title also gave me that sense of identity. Like, oh, this is what I am too.

Feeling validated in their work as a teacher and the development of that identity was fundamentally transformative for each of the participants. This helped them to feel connected and more willing to explore areas of growth and challenge. The differences between experiences of validation presented subtly within the data but were nonetheless impactful and important to note. As Anika described it, her experience was that, “I *did* this right” as opposed to Helen who was struck by the realization that, “this is what I *am* too.” The process of teacher identity development for these participants was not solely one of engaging in teaching behaviors or taking on teaching roles or titles, but instead a nuanced combination of both *doing* and *being*.

Feedback

The concept of feedback was much more closely related to the *doing* of teaching than the *being* of a teacher. While engaged in teaching, participants wanted to feel validated that they were effective. During periods of debrief or supervision, participants strongly desired feedback that the work they were producing, whether that was a lecture being presented, an assignment being graded, or a meeting being held with a student, was of quality. Most participants expressed a desire for feedback regardless of whether it was positive or negative. Positive feedback was received as validation and communicated the message that students were teaching “right” and well regarded in the eyes of their supervisor. Negative or constructive feedback was often interpreted as a means by which to grow, though this was not always the case. How constructive feedback was received varied greatly depending on the nature of the relationship between the student and individual giving feedback. In situations where students felt that their supervisors were invested in them personally and genuinely cared about their development as teachers, constructive feedback was seen as an opportunity to learn from mistakes. Oliver put it as:

And so again, I'm never going to go to [my supervisors] and think like, they're going to tell me that I've done something horribly wrong and I'm like terrible at my job. It's more about just having that learning experience, you know?

The "never" in Oliver's statement is telling in that it speaks to the confidence he had gained in his own identity as a teacher and also in the relationship he had built with his supervisors. He was open to receiving feedback and knew that it would be the type that would build him up. Leo had similar thoughts: "I think the things that I felt hindered me in the moment were nice lessons I was just not in the place to learn yet. Like, with supervision, I could question, what could I have done differently here?"

Other participants experienced the feedback they received as unhelpful or even damaging, at times. Aaron described a situation in which he wanted to reconnect with a previous supervisor with whom he had a negative experience while co-teaching. As he told it:

And so I reached out and asked if they would be comfortable helping me. And they said yes. So I sent it to them hoping for feedback and to this day have yet to hear anything. Like, it's been a month and a half... And now that I'm thinking about it, I'm having that same response as before of like, man, I could use just a little bit of help here. And you've made some sort of choice that you don't want to help provide that.

Helen mentioned her own experience with a supervisor who was lacking in the quality of their feedback to her:

So with my first supervisor, I would write papers in internship, but I didn't really get much help from that. There was nothing saying you're going to be a great teacher or that you need to do this or that, like those papers are pretty much just graded. I don't consider that support.

Later on, she described an experience with her peers that had the opposite effect, stating:

But I think the running theme across my experience is whether or not I'm being told I'm doing a good job. That's probably propelled me much further than if I had not had people invested in me. Like during supervision, having my peers say, like, that's a great idea. There's a really cool thing you're doing. How did you create your whole class? If I didn't get those words of affirmation I think I would still be very much in my head, still insecure.

With this experience, Helen very nicely encapsulates the essence of the connection felt by participants when they were actively engaged with the development of their identity as teachers. She described the support of having an environment where she could seek and receive help in a way that felt safe for her. She benefited from the external validation that helped her to feel a sense of belonging in her budding identity as a teacher. Further, she received feedback that what she was doing was well-regarded and in-line with who she was becoming. Together, this helped her to be more present in her developmental process and resolve some of the insecurities she previously held. Collectively, this resulted in her feeling connected enough to her students, peers, and mentors that she was able to reconcile her doubts and believe in the support she was being offered.

Theme 2: Confidence, or Lack Thereof

Participants in this study shared a common experience of the development of their confidence in both their skills as a teacher and their comfort in assuming the identity of a teacher. Most participants, namely those who had little or no previous teaching experience before entering their doctoral program, began their work as teachers with a lack of confidence and an abundance of doubt. Fortunately, for most this was eventually reversed with the helpful additions

of Support and Validation, as discussed above. Before this, participants went through a period of transition where they were forced to draw on the confidence they held within other professional identities to facilitate the transformation of doubt into confidence as aided by the Support and Validation received externally. For nearly all participants, this internal confidence was drawn from their identities as supervisors or counselors.

I'm an Imposter

Long before that transformation took place, most participants began their journeys as teachers feeling as if they did not belong. This “Imposter Monster” played a constant role in the early development of many of the participants. The experience of imposter syndrome shared between each of the participants was universal in its description of negative self-talk that was fueled by insecurity, fear, and feelings of perceived isolation. In short, a lack of confidence resulted in an abundance of imposter syndrome. Feelings of responsibility were closely tied to this process as students wrestled with their impact as teachers. Some questioned whether their skills could fulfill the responsibility they believed was inherent in the role of teacher. Others felt a sense of responsibility for the clients of the students they were teaching. A small section of participants felt responsibility in relation to their racial identity and setting a positive example for students with similar racial backgrounds. Regardless of its prevalence, the Imposter Monster played an important role in the development of confidence for these participants. Almost universally it was experienced as an initial hurdle, almost a rite of passage or psychological hazing, of sorts. Aaron recalled it as such:

Oh yeah, I mean it was completely overwhelming because I was just certain I had messed something up. Like, I had no idea what I was doing and I knew it, and they knew it...I was just so embarrassed. I felt like I had failed in every way.

One of his initial experiences as a teacher was marred by his feelings of anxiety that caused him to forget some of his material, become overwhelmed, and then feel as if everyone believed that he did not belong. Helen shared that she also felt like this, even after achieving something that was significant for her:

At that point I had taught two full classes by myself, which I was really proud of, but I still thought of myself as more of a follower than a leader. Like, following the instructor and not claiming that identity.

The transition into her identity as teacher felt sudden for her and as such, she wrestled with the ability to gain confidence in who she was, stating, "...like I jumped in with the teaching rather than gaining the confidence in my abilities to teach like, oh okay we're starting now." A part of Helen wanted to feel secure in her identity before having to face the accusations of the imposter monster and her own self-defeating critique.

Eva also desired that confidence before meeting with a student to discuss grades, "Actually, I didn't feel comfortable afterwards. They didn't feel comfortable. I didn't feel backed up. I didn't feel any, how can I say, positive feelings about that situation. It was all challenging." For her, the lack of confidence was in how this meeting was proposed to her:

I guess I did feel supported afterwards, but I did not feel supported before. It was more of a task, like, go and do this and report back and let us know how it goes. I don't feel like, if I were the instructor of record, I would have done it that way. Especially now that I've had a bit more experience, I don't know if I would push a first-year student to do that.

The imposter presented itself as a message that she would not be able to handle the meeting or even worse, considering that the student took poorly to the meeting and became very upset, that Eva had done harm to the student.

Anika shared her own encounter with the Imposter Monster during her first semester teaching alone:

So it was all online, and they gave me an instructor position first-off. And I didn't have an internship for teaching yet, I didn't have any experience. They were just like, here you go! And the learners, they didn't know how to do anything. This is their first class...Um, and then I have to create all of this material too? Like, [I am] experiencing it for the first time with [the students]... And ultimately, there was a lot of 'I don't think they're reading this' or 'I don't think I'm making a difference.'

For Anika, feeling like an imposter was a function of being thrown into an environment that she did not feel full prepared for and then also dealings with feelings of doubt that the material she was creating was engaging enough to compel her students to participate. As in this case, the ways in which participants' confidence was affected was complex and multifaceted. Anika was dealing with her own thoughts of not belonging in the place of someone teaching a solo online class to brand new master's students, doubt of whether she was doing "good enough," and doubts of whether she was making an impact in the lives of the students.

The essence of this subtheme is centered around the participants' search for a place in which they felt secure and could cautiously step-out and test themselves and their new identities as teachers. This security was found in knowledge of their potential and was derived from past success within other identities. Imagine, perhaps, this place as an island. That island was surrounded by murky water, shielding the submerged Imposter Monster. Sometimes, they would dip their toes into these waters of growth only to be met with the teeth of the Imposter Monster. They would then retreat, fixate on their insecurities, nurse their bitten toes, and wait until their sense of Connection was restored to the point that they could test the waters again.

I'm Responsible

For many of the participants, this sense of *impact* was an important part of their developmental process. During the early stages of data analysis, I was content with the term *impact* as being sufficient in describing the nature of the relationship between the participants' effects on the students they were teaching and their own thoughts on their development as teachers. As I further immersed myself in the data, I came to understand that this element I was seeing was less about the impact the participants themselves were having on their students and more about the *responsibility* they felt for making an impact.

Nala felt this as she discussed coming to understand the importance of gatekeeping as a doctoral student and future counselor educator:

Because ultimately the goal is that you're training people to go be clinicians in the field. And so if you're saying, hey, you're competent, you know, you need to actually be sure that they know what they're doing. Like, they know suicide assessment. If they don't actually know suicide assessment, there's like very real-world practical applications. She felt the responsibility of her work as a co-instructor tasked with teaching suicide assessment in a way that was real and tangible for her. In addition, this sense of responsibility was directly tied to how she thought of herself as a teacher:

And so it's like, as an educator, how do you both teach the material and also balance this undercurrent of sometimes discomfort, or actual outright fear [the students] have? Because some of that is very realistic. And some of that is like, maybe we're getting into some thinking errors here. It is very anxiety provoking. Nala desired the confidence that she would be able to manage the fears of her students related to gatekeeping and teach them the content.

Aaron spoke at length about the sense of responsibility he felt when working as a teacher.

I think an active responsibility is real, that's a good way to put it. You know, it's not like when you're a student. When I've been a student I've felt responsibility to have some idea of what's going on and to participate. But in this way, I'm actively responsible for what's going on instead of in a reactive way. So it's almost like my responsibility now is to provide the impetus instead of just engage.

In this statement, Aaron clearly demonstrated himself wrestling with the incorporation of something he understood from a previous identity (that of student) into his new identity of teacher. That responsibility continued to be transformative for him as he gained more experience as a teacher. In describing how he was able to help his students transcend a conversation from a place of comfort to one of vulnerability, he excitedly recalled, "I was just like, 'Oh, I did this!' And that is what helped them be able to have that conversation." Recognizing that sense of responsibility instilled in him the confidence that his students did not progress solely on accident, but due at least in part because of his intervention as a teacher. As he succinctly put it, "You know, I felt like I was responsible for what was going on, and that's what made me feel like a teacher."

I'm a Counselor

In much the same way that Aaron in the previous example used the sense of responsibility he felt as a student to inform the sense of responsibility he felt as a teacher, many of the participants drew heavily on their other professional identities to supplement their lack of confidence. It is unsurprising that this was most often done with the identity of counselor. Helen, when reflecting on significant experiences within her development as a teacher, stated:

I think having that identity as a counselor and having done group first and so often at the hospital prepared me in a way that I wasn't anticipating. Like, I got used to reading the room in therapy groups. I think that carried over into my teacher identity because I can read my students pretty well. I have a really good relationship with my students.

Interestingly, Helen also mentioned her experiences as a counselor leading process group in an inpatient hospital setting in the beginning of her first interview, stating, "...the only experience I had talking in front of people were my patients at the hospital. And that wasn't an education group, it was a therapy group, quite different." It seems that during the time between the beginning of the first interview and the end of the second (the place from which her first comment is drawn), Helen had come to a greater appreciation of the impact of her identity as a counselor, the skills that came with it, and how those played a part in her development as a teacher.

Oliver also shared how his experiences as a counselor informed his teacher identity development:

So the first course I taught was counseling children and adolescents. And, if it was going to be any course I was going to start out teaching live, it'd be that course because of my background. 99% of my counseling was with children, adolescents, and families. So, at the very least I knew I was experienced with the content.

Beginning his teaching as a doctoral student, Oliver received the immediate confidence boost of not only being familiar with the content of the course he was assigned to teach, but also feeling more developmentally "at home" in that he was able to draw on the confidence he felt as a counselor. Later, he even commented that he felt like he could, "ease in with that course." This pairing of experience in counseling to early teaching experiences, though not intentional on the

part of Oliver or his supervisors, seemed helpful in that it allowed him to approach the development of his teacher identity in a more stepwise fashion.

Leo's experiences were more existential and tied to his personal approach to counseling and how he understood himself as a counselor. He elaborated on working to find a theory of teaching and learning that fit for him.

For me, it's a lot like my counseling theory, like, we're finding a theory that fits our soul.

It's not like we're having to recreate the wheel kind of thing. So, I was naturally doing that in small bits and now I'm more intentionally doing it because that's what my teaching philosophy says I need to do.

Again, when considering *who* he wanted to be as a teacher he was immediately drawn to *who* he is as a counselor. In this, Leo was able to find the confidence that comes with the support of theory and evidence-based practice, but also with the knowledge that what he was doing *fit* for him as a person.

I'm a Supervisor

A smaller group of participants drew heavily from the confidence they felt in their roles as supervisors to supplement the lack of confidence they felt while teaching. Bellini, who notably was uninterested in teaching during the beginning of her doctoral program because she believed it would limit her ability to, "get those intimate moments with people like you get as a counselor, or supervisor, or like a clinical supervisor with folks," recalled her experiences as a supervisor when describing how she has settled into her identity as a teacher:

I almost view it like when you oscillate between roles as a supervisor, like you're moving from the counselor role to the teacher role. I almost view it like that and I know that's supervision, but in the moment it felt like that.

In a moment of discomfort where Bellini found herself having to “like code switch to be a group leader,” she found confidence in her ability to transition between the roles of teacher, counselor, and expert more seamlessly while in the role of supervisor.

Interestingly, Nala described a somewhat similar experience, albeit in reverse. As she put it:

So that’s interesting because my first teaching experience was before I did supervision.

And so when we do supervision, they would have us do the class and supervise like three master’s students while the class was going on. So there’s almost like a practicum component to the supervision class. You do the supervision class and you do the supervision practicum.

Due to the organization of her program, Nala did not have the benefit of drawing on her confidence as a supervisor when beginning her development as a teacher because she was inexperienced in both roles. Later, when she began her work as a supervisor, this structure seemed to affect her:

So it was like, I had already experienced some of these master’s students. And then I was put into this supervisor role. Some of them I knew, some of them were kind of friendly, and some of them were like, “Oh, she was my instructor.” They were like, “So, you were my instructor and now you’re my supervisor?” And I think it might have been different if I had this experience at another university.

Nala indicated that she believed her experience might have been different had she been given the opportunity to work as a supervisor before beginning her training as a teacher.

Theme 3: Who am I, Who are you?

The final theme that emerged from the data was oddly one of the most prevalent and yet most difficult to grasp. Repeatedly, I heard experiences from participants where they were relating to others within their developmental process, either co-instructors, students, or peers. I first believed this was tied to the theme of Connection and grouped it there, but later came to understand that this was a different, perhaps deeper experience. More than half of the participants spoke about some element of their cultural of gender identity and how that influenced the developmental of their identity as teachers. The process of Connection was present in those experiences, but did not sufficiently give voice to the developmental catalyst that was present when participants were faced with a situation where they had to ask themselves, “So who am I, who are you, and how do we understand each other?” This catalyst was present when Danny was teaching about the importance of advocacy and multicultural awareness to a group of primarily White master’s students and could palpably *feel* that what he was offering was not being accepted because it was challenging. This catalyst was also present when Nala was able to Connect with her supervisor to the point where her supervisor was able to challenge Nala’s approach because she made the effort to see Nala as a combination of student, teacher, and as a Latinx woman. Interestingly, Danny also felt the weight of the catalyst in this regard as he sat in supervision, watching his friends and peers who were also persons of color present, succeed, and be recognized. A part of him felt that he was able to share in the light of their growth because he viewed those peers are representatives of himself in a deeply personal and intimate way. Eva shared an interaction that does well to frame these ideas. She began by recalling a class on andragogy that she had taken within her department:

So that college teaching class I took in my second year of the program, I don't know if it negatively affected my development, but it definitely hindered it. Yah, hindered it. Like, we wrote papers on teaching identity and papers on teaching techniques and had discussions, right? But I didn't really feel like I explored my teacher identity, my identity as an educator. I was doing the readings. I was engaged in the discussions. But the books I was reading, the ones assigned for class, I didn't feel like they were culturally relevant for me.

Already there is an asking of the question, "who am I, who are you?" Eva experienced herself as a Latinx woman who desired to be challenged in ways that helped her to grow in her identity as a teacher, not just in her teaching skills. She experienced the classroom environment, the metaphorical *you* in this scenario, as something that was separate from her. Specifically, the textbook with which she was not able to connect. She shared this with her instructor.

And more than that, the two other doc students of color agreed with me. So we talked to the teacher and he agreed with us right away. He was like, "Oh really? I am going to take this book out of the syllabus and not use it anymore." I mean, okay, but he didn't challenge me. He just took my word for it. It was like, I wanted to talk about it and have a discussion, but he did not want to provide that space.

For some students, this could be interpreted as a positive result. Eva, however, did not necessarily want the book removed from the syllabus, she wanted to be heard. She wanted to feel Connected. Knowing herself, this experience answered the question of, "who are you?" and left her feeling isolated and disconnected.

This theme emerged from the data in two distinct ways, as either a sensation of loneliness or togetherness. The path she was taken was much less dependent upon the participant than the

situation itself. In other words, many of the participants felt both loneliness and togetherness at different times during the development of their educator identity, though it nearly always related to their understand of their own cultural identity as opposed to the identity of someone else with whom they interacted.

Loneliness

For participants in this study, loneliness was characterized as a feeling of social, relational, or intellectual isolation. Eva's experience was one that impacted her deeply.

I was around other TA's who didn't share the same eye as me, you know? At the time, I was the only Latina doctoral student and the only one from out-of-state. I was also one of the youngest there. And like, not only did I look very young, but I'm also very short, so there's that. And there were a couple times, often actually, that I was teaching alongside a male from another ethnicity, most of them were White.

Eva was intimately awareness of a sense of otherness she felt when she was teaching. This experience was multifaceted for her in that it contained elements of homesickness, marginalization, and inferiority. Eva experienced this most intensely when she related it to her identity as a woman:

...There was one time I taught alongside a Black male; he was little bit older than me. And like right away, the students would listen to him when he would teach. Like, they'd refer to him a lot. Like, oh [Male TA] said this or [Male TA] said that, and like you're saying something different? Well, [Male TA] gave me this feedback, but now you're telling me this?

These feelings also extended to her experiences in group supervision. She continued, "And I often taught in a team where I was the only female. I felt like I had to *constantly* prove myself all

the time.” Eva was fortunate to have found a female mentor during her time in her doctoral program, but much of her early development as a teacher was done battling feelings of isolation related to her ethnicity and/or gender.

Anika related with an experience that left her feeling isolated from her students:

So there was this period where I felt like my students were not reading anything at all.

So, I wrote them, and I posted the faculty expectations in the classroom. And in that, they were supposed to say they read it and agreed to it. After that, 17 of the 18 learners in the class emailed back and said yes, I read it. I agree. And then one wrote back and said, hey, your link doesn’t work. And then I realized 17 of them didn’t even click the link.

In this, Anika questioned herself and how she was able to relate to her students.

So at that point, I really had this feeling of what am I doing, what’s the point? I don’t even know. It affected not just my effectiveness as a teacher, as in my communication with them, but also pointed out that I made an error, which is like, you know, I’m not allowed to do that in my head... It was like, do they take me seriously? What’s wrong with me?

This lack of Connection resulted in an emergence of the Imposter Monster that eventually led to a sensation of loneliness. She felt that her students did not respect her as a teacher and thus felt apart from them. Like many of the examples above, Anika felt a personal responsibility for her students and their engagement with the reading she assigned. More than that, her students’ lack of engagement led her to question herself and how she related to them.

Togetherness

This subtheme, along with Loneliness, can be characterized as two different sides of the same coin. They presented as very different groups of experiences in which the participants

made meaning around a similar, larger experience. That experience most commonly centered around trying to better understand how their identities related to those around them and how that affected the development of their identity as a teacher. Togetherness was most often experienced as a moment where participants felt included, supported, or otherwise encouraged in their identity as a teacher in a way that was supported by another identity they hold, most often their racial/ethnic or gender identity. Danny shared his experience with this:

You know, oftentimes I feel that peers play a bigger role than mentors 'cause when we co-teach together oftentimes I'm like, wow, they're so creative. Sometimes I wish I was more creative but really, I'm just in awe of my peers.

Danny begins by explaining the respect and admiration he holds for his peers. This statement begins to touch on the idea of Togetherness because of how closely he identifies with this peer group. He does not look up to them from a distance, like he might with a mentor or supervisor, he respects them while also recognizes that that they are together with him. He continued:

So just learning from their lectures, seeing their creativity, I think is one huge piece that I really try to draw from. I also have some peers, especially those who are persons of color, who have really learned to speak up in class. When it's a difficult subject the students may not be feeling very ready to talk about it, but still their willingness to just go there as instructors is something I've really learned from.

Danny felt encouraged to conceptualize his identity as a teacher through the lens of his identity as a person of color after watching peers who were also persons of color approach challenging situations with students.

Nala also shared her experience in a situation similar to the one Danny described watching his peers go through:

And so it was really interesting working with a primarily White, Caucasian class. Talking to the students, some of them were like, ‘I’ve never worked with a person of color. I didn’t have any Black friends growing up. I don’t know how to sit in a session with a Black person and talk about cultural differences. Like, the idea terrifies me.’ So, like yes, it was a difficult class to teach sometimes.

Nala framed her experience by sharing that it was difficult at times for her to work with students that were primarily White as they struggled to understand how to talk to clients who were persons of color about cultural differences. She added:

So it’s tough because I am Hispanic and the teacher I was teaching with was Black. So it’s like, you have two female counselor educators of color and you ask yourself, how do I make this a safe space for you? But like overall it was a really positive experience because I felt like, okay, I can set this up. I can build this with you. And also my supervisor was amazing. Like, she got it, you know?

Nala felt joined to her students and her supervisor through her identities as a teacher, a woman, and a person of color. By having the Support of her supervisor who saw her as not just a doctoral student, but a female doctoral student of color, she was able to draw together to those identities and weave them more closely to her identity as a teacher.

Summary

In Chapter Four I presented my analysis and results of my investigation into the experiences of CEDS as they develop their identities as teachers. I provided brief descriptions of each participant alongside their relevant experiences for the sake of context and explanation. I outlined the process of data analysis and the emergence of initial findings into preliminary themes, final themes, and subthemes. I also shared some of my personal experiences of being

immersed in this data and how my understanding of it evolved over time and I became more immersed in the experiences of the participants.

The lived experiences of the participants supported the development of three independent yet interconnected themes. These themes evolved throughout the data analysis process and finally emerged as *Connection, Confidence or Lack thereof*, and *Who am I, Who are You?* The first two themes *Connection* and *Confidence, or Lack thereof* shed light on how CEDS come to find their find themselves as they develop their identity as teacher. These processes are defined by the connections they make with others, the value they receive from those connections, and how that value is eventually internalized to manifest as an experience that exists along a spectrum with confidence on one end and anxiety or fear on the other. The third theme, *Who am I, Who are you?* reveals the processes participants went through to meld their racial/ethnic or gender identities with their professional identities. This theme was particularly relevant for Nala, Cami, Eva, and Danny, who each shared experiences of how their identities as a person of color, woman, or both shaped their development as a teacher. This journey was unique to each participant, situationally dependent, and largely influenced by whether they felt included or excluded based on their personal identities. Overall, participants' experiences were consistent with some previously explored models of identity development for CEDS (e.g., Moss et al., 2014). Additionally, participants shared experiences that held deeper meaning than some of those previously explored, such as the difficulties of developing your identity as a teacher while also feeling the need to be conscientious of your identity as a woman, or a person of color. The final chapter will include a discussion of the themes, limitations of the study, implications for doctoral students and counselor educators, and recommendations for future research.

Chapter 5: Discussion

This study sought to investigate the ways in which CEDS developed their identities as teachers. The pursuit of this understanding was framed through two research questions: (1) What are the lived experiences of counselor education doctoral students related to the development of their identities as teachers? and (2) How do those experiences affect the development of their identities as teachers? I chose a transcendental phenomenological approach to investigate and better understand these experiences. In so doing, I sought to investigate the lived experiences of the participants through semi-structured interviews while being intentional about bracketing preconceived notions I had about doctoral students, counselor education, professional identity development, teaching, or anything else relevant to the experiences of the participants. In this, I worked to approach participants as a naive observer (Moustakas, 1994) with the goal of unbiasedly reporting their lived experiences as teachers. In the following sections, I provide a thorough discussion of individual primary themes and how the thematic structure relates to my theoretical approach. I also discussed the limitations of this study alongside implications for both CEDS and counselor educators. I conclude this chapter with a brief section regarding my recommendations for future research.

Discussion of Primary Themes

Interviews with the participants resulted in the emergence of three primary themes as discussed in the previous chapter. These interviews were done in such a way as to allow the experiences of the participants to best come to light. The goal of this process was to intentionally approach the true essence of those experiences through an understanding of their structural and textural components (Moustakas, 1994). The discussion of the essence of those experiences will run parallel to an exploration of the influence of my theoretical frame.

Kolb's (1984) Experiential Learning Theory was critical in providing a framework upon which to build a theoretical understanding of the experiences of these participants and the essential components of those experiences. The emergent results of this study revealed how participants first engaged with a concrete experience, as in Kolb's (1984) model. Within the context of these results, a concrete experience is best understood as a form of developmental catalyst. These developmental catalysts are participant experiences that resulted in the development of their identity as a teacher. After the onset of that developmental catalyst, participants continued forward towards a period of reflective observation. This took one of two paths, depending on the nature of the catalyst. If participants felt connected and confident in their identities, they were able to approach the next stage with a feeling of togetherness. However, if they felt a lack of connection, confidence, or general "othering" that separated their identity as a teacher from a place of safety, participants approached the next stage from a place of loneliness. The route by which they arrived at their ability to abstractly conceptualize determined the *meaning* that they sought to be reinforced through active experimentation. In other words, participants who had experiences that were defined by feelings of loneliness wrote those feelings into the narrative they used to approach the next developmental catalyst. This process is illustrated in **Figure 1**.

In the following sections, I use this framework alongside the emergence of textural, structural, and essential components to elaborate on the significance of the primary themes to this study and the greater body of literature.

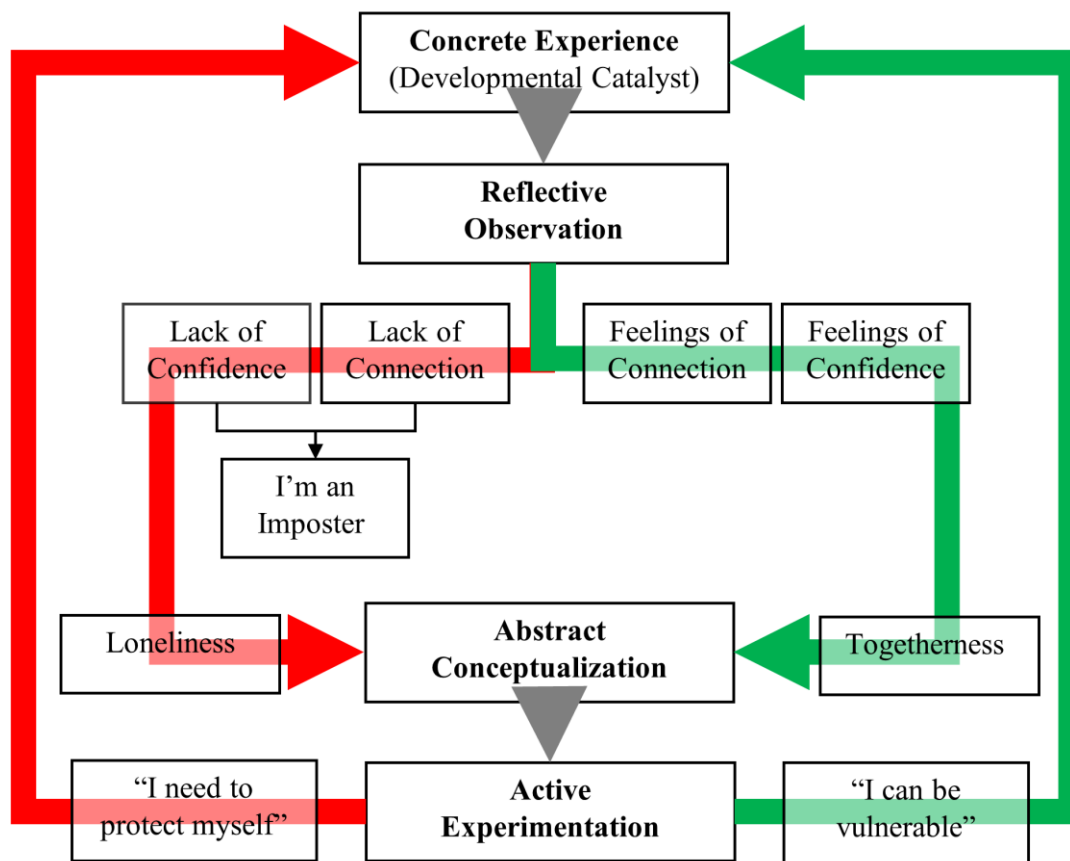


Figure 1. *Conceptual Framework.*

Connection

From the first pair of interviews through the last round of data analysis, Connection emerged as a significant theme present in the experiences of each of the participants.

Participants' ability to ground their identity development within another relationship or identity they held was a fundamental step that served as a type of developmental milestone in many cases. Peers, mentors and co-instructors, and students were the most common sources of these connections. This was consistent with the experiences of Waalkes et al. (2019) who also noted how CEDS in teaching internships would often rely on their peers for moral support. It was also consistent with the reports of Limberg et al. (2013) and Dollarhide et al. (2013) who both highlighted the importance of feedback, support, and validation for CEDS in their professional identity development.

When interviewing participants, I was struck by the power of Connection and its ability to define the meaning of an experience. For instance, there were numerous examples shared by several of the participants that seemed to be somewhat universal, relatively uncomfortable, and developmentally significant. As an example, several participants shared their experience of receiving critical feedback from a mentor or co-instructor. This same experience was noted by participants in both Dollarhide et al. (2013) and Limberg et al. (2013) and appears to extend beyond the realm of teacher identity development into the larger sphere of professional identity development. Limberg et al. (2013) reported "Value of conversations with faculty" as a typically frequent in their results, indicating that it was among the most prevalent of themes. Similarly, Dollarhide et al. (2013) described the entire first phase of their model as "External Validation", noting the importance of feedback from mentors. While this is not the same in that the process of External Validation referenced by Dollarhide et al. (2013) is generally limited to positive

interactions with mentors and peers, the findings run parallel. Findings from both studies highlight the importance of a student's feelings of Connection with the individual from whom they are receiving the external validation. Surely a doctoral student learning to be a teacher would be less encouraged and feel less supported by validation received from a stranger as opposed to someone with whom they felt emotionally connected.

Furthermore, that scenario is assuming that external validation was universally available and equitably dispersed, which was not the case for participants in this study. In the Transformational Tasks Model, Dollarhide et al. (2013) imply that CEDS have equal access to opportunities for external validation by making no mention of situations in which one student may be less likely to receive external validation when compared to another. Participants in this study almost universally shared experiences that were in alignment with the Transformational Tasks Model except that those experiences were not equitably available. As noted in Chapter 4, participants who identified as persons of color or female described much greater challenges in receiving external validation as compared to their White and male peers. These findings in no way dispute the Transformational Tasks Model, but instead beg the question of whether that model is as applicable or sensitive to every student in every situation.

In addition, the discrepancy in results again highlights the importance of Connection as it relates to professional identity development. CEDS who, for whatever reason, are less likely to receive meaningful external validation are less likely to feel Connected to their mentors and program and thus less able to progress in the development of their professional identities.

By comparing the findings within this study to other notable pieces of literature related to professional identity development, I was better able to understand the essence of Connection by examining its textural and structural components. Again, Moustakas (1994) noted that textural

components are best understood as *what* a participant is experiencing while structural components are best understood as *how* a participant interprets an experience. *What* was experienced could broadly be categorized as either a Connection that grounded the identity development process firmly to a sense of safety or well-being through another individual, a lack of that Connection, and the quality or strength of that Connection. *How* it was experienced was largely defined by the participants' own interpretation of the experience based on their perceived level of Connection. Referring to **Figure 1**, this process took place during the period of Reflective Observation. Participants would consider the present experience (also referred to as a developmental catalyst) and observe themselves as actors in that experience. This level of reflection allowed them to determine if they felt supported enough to frame the experience as one of growth. For most participants, this was considerably easier to do with objectively positive experiences. Receiving positive feedback on a midterm evaluation in a teaching internship puts very little stress on a participant's sense of Connection. Being told they are not developmentally ready to work as a solo instructor, however, introduces tremendous strain on the sense of Connection and can lead to feeling a lack of Connection and Confidence for individuals who did not feel securely Connected beforehand.

Confidence, or Lack Thereof

The second major theme was best understood as the participants' search for confidence through recognition of strengths in other areas and the resulting effects of that search being successful or not. As they wrestled to conceptualize themselves as teachers, many participants first felt the need to bolster their confidence in their own abilities by relating them to skills they possessed as counselors or supervisors. If they could lead a counseling group, they could lead a group discussion. If they could fluidly transition between the roles of teacher, counselor, and

consultant when working with a supervisee, surely they could perform as a teacher in a classroom for an hour during a lecture. Early in the process of identity development, this resulted in an internal monologue that sounded like, “Well I am good at building rapport as a counselor, so I can at least fake it as a teacher,” or “I know how to be helpful as a supervisor, maybe I could do the same when acting as a teacher?” or, as Aaron put it, “I’ve done groups, I know how to plan, that part is easy... I just remember feeling good about what I have done previously.” An identity in which the participant felt more secure and comfortable served as a launch pad for growth into a new identity.

Interestingly, this same phenomenon was noted by participants in Limberg et al. (2013). The authors reported that participants in their study found that teaching experience was significant in the development of their identities as counselor education doctoral students. Moreover, they also noted that skills they had acquired working as supervisors were helpful when teaching. In both studies, students appeared to be bolstered in their confidence by the realization that some of their skills were generalizable between distinct professional identities. There is also some similarity here to results published by Boyd and Harris (2010) that suggested that professional schoolteachers who transition to working in academia also use their previous professional identities to support their development in their new roles. Regardless of the prior professional identity, it appears that individuals transitioning into new professional roles find comfort in being able to rely on skills developed within other professional identities with which they feel more secure.

These themes within the general literature that are also present within the results of this study lead us to the essence of the present theme. By dissecting that essence, we find developmental catalysts as textural components. The *what* of this essence is the experience of

encountering something that has the potential to propel a participant forward along their developmental trajectory. The *how*, or structural component, was the moment in which they dipped their toes in the water and found either solid ground beneath or the waiting jaws of insecurity. The interpretation of an experience determined the way that meaning was structured from it, the essential *how*.

Who am I, Who are You?

The final theme was a question I consistently asked myself while analyzing data. I worked to immerse myself in the experiences of the participants and see their experiences naively, as if from their eyes. In so doing I realized that while engaged with their identities as teachers, many of the participants felt their identity being drawn in one direction or another. This pull was subtle at times, like a nudge. Other times it was more forceful and compelled the participant to move in one direction or another. As I reflected on the data, added to the data set by completing additional interviews, and refined my understanding of the narratives of the participants, I came to understand the pull I was witnessing was towards a place of loneliness or togetherness and was defined by this question: Who am I, who are you?

As an example, let's us imagine a participant engaged in a situation that provoked development in their teacher identity. That participant would absorb the experience and then immediately begin to consider how it applied to them, what was the meaning they needed to make of it? After consideration, they would arrive at a place of loneliness or togetherness and use that sensation to prime their understanding of future experiences. For participants who identified as persons of color or female, the final step in this process was similar, but contained an additional element. These participants answered these questions specific to their gender and racial identities. This was different from other participants who did not consider their identities

as White or male as closely associated with their identity as a teacher. All participants asked these questions in at least one of three ways. For some participants, the question was, “who am I, who are my peers?” For others, the question was, “who am I, and who are my mentors?” Still others experienced the question as, “who am I, and who are my students?” Several of the participants experienced each of these questions at different times during their teacher identity development process.

These findings are unique as they relate to their association with the development of teacher identity in CEDS but are far from unique in terms of the experiences of the participants. Thacker and Barrio Minton (2021) recently published a review of the literature related to the experiences of students and faculty in counselor education who identified as women, persons of colors, or as members of the LGBTQ+ community. Their review highlighted several salient themes also present in the experiences of participants in this study. Notably, participants in this study at times experienced a profound sense of disconnection, which Thacker and Barrio Minton (2021) defined as “isolation as a result of adverse experiences that inhibit or sever connections between professionals” (p. 42).

The implications of this disconnection are noteworthy and complex in that they inhibit the development of the individual professionally, invalidate them personally, and contribute to the cyclical nature of experiences of loneliness described previously in **Figure 1**. Multiple participants noted the difficulties of the feeling like they “fit” in their program, describing climates that ranged from apathetic to openly hostile. CEDS and faculty members across the field of counselor education reported sharing the struggle to feel like their identities were consistently valued and welcomed (Thacker, Barrio Minton, & Riley, in press). Not only does this have the potential to impact the development of their identities as doctoral students,

counselor educators, and teachers, but it also communicates that they as individuals, either in-part or as a whole, are unwanted. This experience was a central component of the theme Who am I, Who are You and is well documented in research regarding doctoral students of color (Gay, 2004; Gildersleeve et al., 2001), female doctoral students (Onwuegbuzie et al., 2014) and members of the LGBTQ+ community who are pursuing doctoral education (Hsueh et al., 2021).

Conversely, individuals in this position may feel that they are *only* wanted for their status as a minority individual leaving them feeling tokenized, vulnerable, and disconnected (Shillingford et al., 2013; Thacker et al., in press). Ultimately, these experiences result in the continuation of the cycles of disconnection, isolation, and loneliness that are well documented in the literature and present in three primary themes that emerged from this study. These cycles reemphasize the importance of Connection and the potential for harm associated with disconnection. They confirm that there is no Confidence apart from feelings of safety and belonging. Lastly, they describe the ongoing challenges of marginalized students and faculty members who are constantly at work trying to understand who they are in relation to those around them.

Each of these three themes emerged after careful analysis of the data and investment on my part to accurately represent the experiences of the participants. These are their voices and their stories. They openly shared their success and failures, joys and fears. It is my hope that in reading this, other students can come to understand that their work as teachers is valuable, needed, and appreciated. And when they feel togetherness or connection, revel in it and share it freely. And when they feel loneliness or exclusion, know that they are not alone.

Limitations

There are several limitations for this study that are worth consideration alongside the results. Phenomenological research carries inherent limitations in that it seeks out the essence of a given experiences of a person or persons and does not probe beyond that. Considering that, the results from this study should be carefully considered in the context in which they are presented and not generalized to a larger population. The results of this study have much to say about the nature of developing teachers in counselor education programs, the teaching experiences of doctoral students who identify as female or persons of color, and more.

The experiences explored in this study were all given from CEDS as they considered the development of their identity as teachers. While this was necessary to answer the research questions, the collective perspective is limited in a way by not also having the experiences of the mentors, peers, supervisors, and co-teachers of the participants involved. Including these experiences was beyond the scope of this study, but the lack of them carries an inherent limitation, nonetheless. Additionally, results from this study were not verified by a research partner or qualitative data analyst other than myself acting as the primary researcher. Due to that, there is a higher chance that results may be biased based on my personal experiences as a doctoral student or teacher. Even though I was diligent with the use of a researcher journal and diligent with the process of bracketing, this study could have been strengthened with the addition of an external auditor. In particular, one who identified differently than I (e.g., race, gender, age or life stage, and/or sexual orientation, [dis]ability, socio-economic status, education-generation, etc.). Having this second set of eyes, would have provided data analysis from a more comprehensive perspective. The followings sections detail implications for members of the field of counseling and how those implications might be crafted as future opportunities for research.

In addition to that, this study would have benefited from a larger participant pool. While garnering 10 participants was adequate and sufficient enough to answer the research questions, a larger participant pool could have added richness and depth to results. Beyond that, this study could have been limited by the fact that participants were still in the beginning stages of their development as teachers. This was beneficial in the fact that participants were able to recall situation and experiences that happened recently. Despite that, participants might have felt differently if that they a greater time to reflect on these experiences or had further experience working as professional counselor educators.

Implications

This study presented the experiences of ten counselor education doctoral students (CEDS) as they taught, graded, and thoughtfully considered the development of their identities as teachers. Their experiences culminated in the development of a rich narrative full of excitement, doubt, disappointment, and courage. It is my hope that the findings from this study spur continued discussion on best practices related to the development of the professional identity of teacher for CEDS.

The participants within this study and their doctoral student peers are the next generation of counselor educators and will be tasked with training subsequent generations of professional counselors. Those professional counselors will find themselves employed in schools, community mental health agencies, private practice, hospitals, recovery centers, and countless other institutions working with real people engaged with real suffering and pain. Those individuals are more likely to thrive when their counselors are well-trained, competent, and confident in their abilities. In parallel, professional counselors are more likely to thrive when their teachers and mentors are likewise well-trained, competent, and confident in their abilities. Efforts to improve

and refine the processes of teacher identity development for CEDS have implications that span the breadth of the spectrum of relationships in counseling, from the counselor educator to the client and every step in-between.

Despite this breadth and the potential for implications in a number of areas, implications are most salient as they relate to CEDS and the counselor educators who work with them. The narrative that emerged from this study was derived from the experiences of a group of passionate and enthusiastic CEDS. It is my hope that this narrative serves as a foundation for the improvement of their experiences as they work to become teachers.

Counselor Education Doctoral Students

CEDS working to develop their identities as teachers as faced with several truths: firstly, life as a CEDS is, in general, stressful and full of challenges (Limberg et al., 2013; Moss et al., 2013). Secondly, developing as a teacher is stressful and full of challenges (Baltrinic et al., 2016; Elliot et al., 2019). Developing ourselves as teachers, supervisors, counselor, leaders, and researchers feels overwhelming at times. The growing pains associated with that development were felt by each participant within this study. Even though those experiences were unique to those individuals, they still provide helpful insight on how we as CEDS can thrive as both teachers and individuals.

As CEDS, we should be intentional in the ways in which we approach our supervisors, mentors, and co-instructors. The opportunity to sit with each of these groups or individuals and reflect on our development as teachers is crucial to the identity development process (Elliot et al., 2019). Unfortunately, those opportunities are not universal in quality or quantity. Our faculty are required to provide us with academic and interpersonal challenges as well as conditions under which we can hone our skills as teachers (CACREP, 2016). They are not, however,

required to do this in a way that is unique, personal, and intrinsically motivating for every CEDS they encounter. That would be the ideal, yes, but is not the reality for many of us (Hall & Hulse, 2010; Waalkes et al., 2018). What this means, however, is that the responsibility for our development as teachers is shared between ourselves, our faculty, and peers.

For our part, we must be intentional about engaging in spaces that promote our growth as teachers *and* as individuals. The literature on mentorship and the experiences of participants in this study agree: spaces in which CEDS feels that they are valued and nurtured as teachers *and* individuals are going to be more valuable than one or the other (Baltrinic et al., 2018; Briggs & Pehrsson, 2008). To accomplish this, CEDS should invest heavily in the relationships with mentors who are intentional about helping them develop as more than just a professional. Nala had a sense for this when she was challenged in individual supervision by one of her mentors. That faculty member knew Nala well enough as a person and a teacher to point out inconsistencies in how she was behaving in one role versus the other. Not only did this help Nala become more congruent as a teacher and a person, but it also gave her the confidence that she was worth knowing that well.

If our experience is that those spaces are unavailable, unreliable, or otherwise unable to meet our developmental needs, we must be intentional about creating them. Firstly, because it serves us and our wellbeing as teachers and individuals. Secondly, because it has the potential to serve our peers as we recognize the value of the spaces we have created and share them with those around us who are also hungry for support and challenge. And lastly because it serves the field. The creation of these spaces will only positively benefit our development as teachers and thus allow us to be more effective in our work as counselor educators. This in turn improving the field by graduating practicing counselors who are also more effective in their work.

The creation of these spaces can take many forms. Students may create a shared online repository of lessons plans, rubrics, syllabi, and other resources unique to teaching and give access to members of their doctoral communities. Moreover, this digital space could serve as a forum to encourage each other. Students could share praise, allow each other to vent, and be intentional about nurturing their sense of togetherness. Students could seek out mentors from outside their program when they experience that their faculty are not able to meet their developmental needs. Ideally, this would not be the case, but just as “fit” is critical to the success of a counseling relationship, finding a mentor who shares your vision and has time to invest in your personal and professional growth is worth the work. To this point, CEDS might consider a checklist of sorts that organizes and prioritizes their needs in a mentoring relationship. This document could be given to potential mentors and used as a guide to gauge mentor fit and willingness to assist in the mentee’s goals.

Counselor Educators

Counselor educators are the most likely source of mentorship and supervision for CEDS as they develop their identity as teachers. The potential impact that counselor educators have on the CEDS with whom they work in these roles cannot be understated. CEDS will often look to emulate their supervisors as they work to develop their skills and confidence before later branching into a style of their own (Limberg et al., 2013).

Moreover, participants in this study suggested that CEDS also look to their mentors and supervisors for a sense of connection and togetherness. The external validation referenced in models like those presented by Moss et al. (2013) is necessary for CEDS to develop their professional identities. In addition to that, counselor educators should be aware of opportunities to offer validation of *who students are* in addition to *what they do*. Methods to accomplish this

will be unique to each student, but programmatic structure related to achieving this may be helpful. Examples of that structure could be (1) individual identity development plans for each student completed in their first semester in the program. These plans could be co-created between the student and a mentor and outline a rough plan for a student's goals related to each professional identity and how the program can work to support those goals. Furthermore, programs could (2) implement new student mentoring programs to help incoming CEDS establish a sense of Connection with their program and peers. Such programs that already exists could be refined to be more intentional about pairing students with mentors (peer or faculty) who are best able to guide students in their development.

Participants were encouraged when they experienced positive feedback from peers, students, and mentors and used that to reinforce their confidence in their skills as teachers. Beyond that, participants also noted mentors who validated them as individuals and as teachers and helped them to connect their skills to an emerging professional identity. In this, counselor educators can help CEDS transition from, "I'm good at lecturing, so there's that," or "well I give pretty good feedback on written assignments, so I guess I am coming along," to "I am a teacher now."

Another implication for counselor educators concerns departmental culture and the impact that it might have on the professional identity development of CEDS. The impact of departmental culture on the experience of a CEDS was a subtle theme throughout the interviews, though it was far from universal. Despite this, multiple students shared experiences of disharmony or outright hostility among faculty members that caused them to seriously consider their place in the field, including their roles as teachers. Addressing this type of climate is complex, but it begins with the realization that programmatic climate significantly affects

doctoral student development (Woo et al., 2017) with those possessing marginalized identities being even more greatly affected (Thacker & Barrio Minton, 2021). Counselor educators must be intentional in their efforts to reflexively consider the power of their stations and the effect of that power on those below them. No amount of collegiality will remove the inherent power differential that exists between teacher and learner, faculty member and doctoral student. This reflexive consideration should be done openly, honestly, and modeled for students in order that they may learn from the examples set by their faculty (Thacker et al., in press).

Ultimately, counselor educators are humans and (despite the efforts of most) they make mistakes or fall short. As humans we will find ourselves in the wrong, acting hurtfully, maybe even maliciously. While there is no getting away from that, counselor educators are wise to be mindful of how their interactions with their peers and other faculty members might reflect in the minds of their students. Counselor education departments should intentionally include language in their program handbooks and syllabi that promotes open discussion between students and faculty about the health of the entire program, consistent with CACREP (2016) Standard 4.J. Though not explicitly written in the *Standards*, counselor education faculty could consider evaluating themselves as a faculty group much the same as the students evaluate them individually.

It is important to note that counselor educators are in no way fully responsible for any one student deciding to pursue another path in the field or leave it altogether. That being true, there is a shared responsibility related to providing a space for CEDS to develop as teachers, supervisors, leaders, scholars, and counselors. That space extends beyond the individual classroom or supervision session and is inclusive of the interactions that any student may bear witness to.

Recommendations for Future Research

The experiences shared by participants in this study and the themes that emerged from them have potential to shape future research in the field of counselor education. Future research in this area has the potential to improve the experiences of CEDS as they develop their identities as teachers, improve their skills and confidence in their work as teachers, and relatedly improve outcomes from master's level counseling students who will hopefully have access to faculty members who are more secure in their identities as teachers and more confident in their skills.

To begin, the results of this study highlight the possibility of a relationship between previous experience as a professional counselor and confidence when working as a teacher. Several of the participants who had experiences working as professional counselors (beyond those required as part of their master's level training) described situations in which they were able to draw on their counseling skills for use within the classroom. Some related teaching a classroom full of students to leading a process group. Another noted how working in a community mental health setting taught them how to develop rapport quickly with clients and how beneficial this skill was when meeting students for the first time. Future research could investigate the relationship between self-efficacy as a counselor and as a teacher. Results of this study could be used to more accurately predict feelings of confidence in CEDS working as teachers and help counselor educators more readily identify CEDS who may require additional mentoring or support.

In a similar vein, I would also recommend further research into the intentional pairing of skills in counseling to content taught within a counseling course. All CEDS are going to have a working knowledge of theory, research, counseling skills, and other fundamental counseling topics. Other CEDS, particularly those not entering directly out of their master's program, may

have additional skills, training, or certifications earned while in practice as a professional counselor. It would be worth investigating how CEDS who are able to begin their development as teachers from a place of curricular familiarity compare to others who are given a course to co-teach at random. For instance, it would be helpful to know that CEDS experienced in group work feel more effective as instructors when teaching a groups skills class and thus feel more connected, more confident, and more secure in that professional identity. Allow CEDS to begin their development as teachers with a class with which they have some professional competence may have implications for their teacher identity development.

Another area of research that I recommend involves further investigation into the facets of professional identity for CEDS. Jorgensen and Duncan (2015a; 2015b; 2018) have demonstrated fascinating results in this area with master's level counseling students and researcher identity. Their research supports the idea that the identity of researcher is a unique professional identity separate from that of student, counselor-in-training, advocate, or any other unique identity a master's level counseling student might hold. A framework for how this might develop for CEDS is already embedded in the 2016 *CACREP Standards* with the inclusion of standards related to the preparation of doctoral students as teachers, researchers, counselors, scholars, and leaders. This study sought to add to the collective knowledge of doctoral student in counselor education and how they grow into their roles as teachers. This type of study could be replicated for each of the unique professional identities supported by CACREP (2015). Results from those studies could then be combined to develop a model of professional identity development that is inclusive of the unique professional identities that are separate from that of doctoral student, counselor education doctoral student, or counselor educator.

Lastly, I recommend continued investigation into the effects of marginalization, discrimination, microaggressions, and general othering on the development of teacher identity for CEDS. A dearth of evidence suggests that involvement in higher education or status as a tenured faculty member does little to prevent discrimination based on race, gender, or sexual orientation (Abdul-Raheem, 2016; Maranto & Griffin, 2011; Walkington, 2017). The effects of this were felt and described by participants within this study, notably those who identified as women or persons of color. Black and female participants felt they needed to be mindful of their tone and volume when teaching lest they be labeled as aggressive or “bitchy.” Participants who were persons of color described numerous examples of teaching classes of master’s level counseling students who were primarily White and were struggling with concepts related to race. Researchers and scholars must proactively ask and seek answers to questions such as: How can counselor educators with majority identities best identify themselves as allies to incoming doctoral students and new faculty members who come from marginalized backgrounds? How do counselor education programs create internal systems of evaluation that accurately and honestly assess for standards of inclusivity? How can counselor educators best navigate power differentials to encourage marginalized students to report their concerns and critiques without fear of punishment?

In asking these questions we honor the CEDS whose experiences have necessitated their asking. In answering them, we take further steps towards practices of reflexivity and inclusivity that will ensure that the teachers produced from counselor education programs are as prepared as possible to train the next generation of professional counselors.

Conclusion

To date, there has been limited exploration of the experiences of counselor education doctoral students during their preparation as teachers. There was no prior research specific to the development of teacher identity as for CEDS as separate from their other professional identities. This goal of this study was therefore to fill a gap in our understanding of experiences that significantly affected the development of teacher identity for CEDS. As a doctoral student, counselor educator, and lover of all things related to teaching, I had a vested interest in this project and the results of this study. The use of a phenomenological approach was intentional in that it allowed me to separate myself from the study and give voice to the experience of each of the ten participants. Considering the mix of gender, location, time enrolled in program, and racial/ethnic identity, participants represented a diverse group of doctoral students with a variety of experiences teaching, counseling, and in mentorship. A pair of online interviews yielded a data set rich in narrative and experience.

Analysis of that data resulted in the emergence of three primary themes: **Connection, Confidence, or lack thereof**, and **Who am I, who are you?** each with several relevant subthemes. Primary themes were interpreted through the lens of Experiential Learning Theory (Kolb, 1984) and further detailed in the conceptual framework displayed in **Figure 1**. Participants described experiences teaching, grading, meeting with students, and attending supervision. They also described their feelings of joy, confusion, terror, responsibility, and frustration. Participants were often put into situations in which they were uncomfortable. Those who emerged from these situations with a positive interpretation generally felt more supported by the co-instructor and connected to their peers and mentors. Conversely, participants who recalled these experiences as unhelpful, overwhelming, or even “slightly traumatic” shared a

common experience of feeling less connected or supported. These themes were present on a spectrum that emerged between the subthemes of loneliness and togetherness. Participants were not limited to a single place on this spectrum and often identified with each of these emotions at different times during their development. Moreover, students who identified as either female or as persons of color shared struggles that were unique to those identities. These identities were uniquely intertwined with participants' teacher identity development in ways that were not present for participants that identified primarily as White or male.

Implications for the field of counselor education were centered around counselor education doctoral students and counselor educators. Doctoral students were encouraged to be intentional about finding space in which they could receive support specific to their development as a teacher. If those spaces are unavailable, students were encouraged to look beyond their own doctoral program or create those space themselves. Counselor educators were encouraged to reflect on their roles as mentors and co-instructors and mindfully consider the impact their support and feedback has on the developmental trajectory of students training to be teachers. Both groups were encouraged to consider that the responsibility for progression through developmental milestones is shared between doctoral student and the mentor. Ideally, both groups can fulfill their responsibilities and be enriched in turn.

Recommendations for future research were offered and based on the results of this study. Moving forward, scholars in the field would be wise to consider further investigation of the other unique professional identities of CEDS. Future research should also consider the effects of discrimination and marginalization on the development of teacher identity for CEDS.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Call for Participants

Dear counseling professional:

My name is Wes Allen and I am a doctoral candidate at the University of Tennessee. I am seeking participants for my dissertation research entitled, “The Process of Teacher Identity Development in Counselor Education Doctoral Students”. This study is a requirement to fulfill my degree and will not be used for any decision-making by the organization. This study has been approved by the IRB at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

The purpose of this study is to better understand the process of teacher identity development for counselor education doctoral students. In doing this, I hope to inform the processes of training so that doctoral students feel better prepared to work as teachers of counselors.

Participation is completely on a voluntary basis. Interested participants will be asked to read the qualifying criteria below and contact this writer by phone or email for further participation.

Qualifications for this study: you are a (1) doctoral student currently enrolled in a CACREP accredited counselor education program, (2) you have completed at least one year of full-time study in your doctoral program (or completed the equivalent credits if a part-time student), (3) and you are currently enrolled or have completed a supervised teaching experience. If you meet the qualifying criteria and are interested in participating in this study, please contact me via phone or email. Interested participants will be asked to complete two 45-minute interviews via Zoom. Every effort to protect your privacy, identity, and the integrity of your information will be made. For your effort, each participant who completes both 45-minute interviews will be offered a \$20 Amazon giftcard.

Please forward this information to any student that you feel would be qualified and interested in participating.

Thank you for your time and consideration!

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me:

Wes Allen

Email: wallen12@vols.utk.edu

Phone: (865) 236-1261

Appendix B: Informed Consent

Standard Informed Consent Template for Research

Consent for Research Participation

Research Study Title: The Development of Teacher Identity in Counselor Education Doctoral Students

Researcher(s): Wes Allen, University of Tennessee, Knoxville
Joel Diambra, PhD, University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Why am I being asked to be in this research study?

We are asking you to be in this research study because you have indicated that you are currently enrolled as a doctoral student in a CACREP accredited counselor education program, have completed or are currently involved in a supervised teaching experience, and have completed at least one-year (or the equivalent credit hours) of study in that doctoral program.

What is this research study about?

The purpose of the research study is to better understand the process of teacher identity development for counselor education doctoral students.

How long will I be in the research study?

If you agree to be in the study, your participation will last for two, 45-minute interviews conducted via Zoom, a teleconference software. You will also be sent a copy of the initial findings from your interview and asked to give your thoughts about the accuracy of those findings.

What will happen if I say “Yes, I want to be in this research study”?

If you agree to be in this study, we will ask you to schedule a date and time for two, 45-minute interviews conducted via Zoom. You will also be asked to give your thoughts about the accuracy of the findings related to your interview and will be emailed these approximately one week after your second interview.

What happens if I say “No, I do not want to be in this research study”?

Being in this study is up to you. You can say no now or leave the study later. Either way, your decision won't affect your grades, your relationship with your instructors, or standing with the University of Tennessee or the university you are currently enrolled in.

What happens if I say “Yes” but change my mind later?

Even if you decide to be in the study now, you can change your mind and stop at any time.

If you decide to stop before the study is completed, please contact the principal investigator, Wes Allen (wallen12@vols.utk.edu) and request to be removed from the study. Any information collected from you will be discarded and not used in the research study.

Are there any possible risks to me?

It is possible that someone could find out you were in this study or see your study information, but we believe this risk is small because of the procedures we use to protect your information. These procedures are described later in this form.

Possible risks include potential discomfort at having to recall experiences related to teaching that were uncomfortable, painful, or even harmful. If this is to happen, you may request to skip any question that you do not feel comfortable answering.

Are there any benefits to being in this research study?

We do not expect you to benefit from being in this study. Your participation may help us to learn more about the development of teachers in counselor education. We hope the knowledge gained from this study will benefit others in the future.

Who can see or use the information collected for this research study?

If identifiers will be collected during the study, consider the following:

- *Describe how the study information (i.e., data) and research records (e.g., consent documents, payment records, scheduling logs, etc.) will be kept confidential (e.g., storage, maintenance, transfer/transmission, etc.) by the research team*
- *Describe the individuals and groups who may have access to study information.*
- *Describe any circumstances that would limit confidentiality.*
- *Describe how information will be published and disseminated and whether identifiable information would be included.*

We will protect the confidentiality of your information by ensuring that all materials related to this study are accessible only to the researcher.

If information from this study is published or presented at scientific meetings, your name and other personal information will not be used.

We will make every effort to prevent anyone who is not on the research team from knowing that you gave us information or what information came from you. Although it is unlikely, there are times when others may need to see the information we collect about you. These include:

- People at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville who oversee research to make sure it is conducted properly.
- Government agencies (such as the Office for Human Research Protections in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services), and others responsible for watching over the safety, effectiveness, and conduct of the research.
- If a law or court requires us to share the information, we would have to follow that law or final court ruling.

What will happen to my information after this study is over?

We will not keep your information to use for future research. Your name and other information that can directly identify you will be deleted from your research data collected as part of the study.

We will not share your research data with other researchers.

Will I be paid for being in this research study?

For participating in this study, you will receive a \$20 Amazon giftcard. In order to receive this giftcard, you will need to participate in at least one 45-minute interviews and provide the researcher with an email where the giftcard can be sent.

Who can answer my questions about this research study?

If you have questions or concerns about this study, or have experienced a research related problem or injury, contact the researchers, Wes Allen (wallen12@vols.utk.edu, 865-236-1261) or Dr. Joel Diambra, faculty advisor (jdiambra@utk.edu).

For questions or concerns about your rights or to speak with someone other than the research team about the study, please contact:

Institutional Review Board
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville
1534 White Avenue
Blount Hall, Room 408
Knoxville, TN 37996-1529
Phone: 865-974-7697
Email: utkirb@utk.edu

STATEMENT OF CONSENT

I have read this form and the research study has been explained to me. I have been given the chance to ask questions and my questions have been answered. If I have more questions, I have been told who to contact. By signing this document, I am agreeing to be in this study. I will receive a copy of this document after I sign it.

Name of Adult Participant

Signature of Adult Participant

Date

Appendix C: Interview Guide

Interview Guide

An Investigation of the Development of Teacher Identity for Doctoral Students in Counselor Education

1. Before the interview, check all equipment. Ensure that:
 - a. Video conferencing program is HIPPA compliant and operational
 - b. Video conferencing program is set to record
 - c. Link to the online consent form is working.
 2. Greet interviewee and thank them for participating.
 3. Ensure that interviewee is comfortable.
 4. Ask interviewee if they have any questions before starting.
 5. Ask interviewee if they are ready to begin.
 6. When they are, explain the purpose of the interview.
 - a. State the name of the study
 - b. State the objective of the study
 - c. Inform them of the purpose of their interview in relation to the purpose of the study
 7. Explain that the interview will be audio and video recorded.
 8. Explain their rights related to confidentiality and as a research participant. Highlight these sections on the consent form while doing this.
 9. Ask if they have any questions.
 10. Ask interviewee to sign consent form electronically.
 11. Begin the interview.
 12. Conduct the interview using the protocol listed below.
 13. Be mindful of time!
 14. After script is completed, gather necessary demographic information.
 15. Inform interviewee that they will have opportunity to member check the data after you transcribe it.
 16. Thank participant for their time and end the video conference.
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Script

I want to begin by thanking you again for your time. I appreciate your willingness to talk to me about your experiences as an educator. Know that for the purposes of this interview I consider the words “educator”, “teacher”, “instructor”, and “professor” to mean similar things. Please use whichever feels most congruent with your experience. I hope to use the information gathered during this interview to inform others about the process of teacher identity development, and to improve the quality of education for doctoral students in counselor education programs.

8. At what point did you begin considering yourself as a teacher?
9. Tell me about your first teaching experience.
 - a. What was memorable about it?
 - b. What feelings were present then?
 - c. What feelings are present now, as you recall it?
10. What experience most positively influenced your teacher identity development?
11. What experiences most negatively influenced your teacher identity development?

12. What is the most memorable experience you have while working as a teacher?
 - a. Why is that experience so memorable?
 - b. Do you feel that experience contributed to your development as a teacher, and if so, how?
13. How is your teacher identity development supported in your doctoral program?
14. Is there anything else that you would like to share about your experience as a teacher?

Demographic Information

1. Which of these most accurately describes your gender identity? (male, female, transsexual[male], transsexual[female], gender non-binary, I prefer not to answer)
2. How old are you?
3. Which of these best describes your racial/ethnic identity? Please select all that apply (White/Caucasian, Black/African-American, Asian/Pacific-Islander, Latinx, American Indian or Alaskan Native)
4. Are you a full-time student (Yes, no)?
5. In what year are you in your doctoral program (1st, 2nd, 3rd, more than third, I am a part-time student)?
6. How many times have you been listed as an instructor (primary or co-instructor) for a college level course?
7. In which ACES region is your doctoral program located?

As we wrap up, I want to thank you again for meeting with me today. I appreciate you sharing your experiences as an educator with me. I will be in contact with you via email to share a transcribed copy of our interview today. I invite you to check it for errors, or share any revisions you have for the transcript to most accurately represent your experiences. If for any reason you decide that you do not want your information used in this project, you can withdraw it; your information will be destroyed. I hope that this experience was a positive one. Please contact me if you have any concerns or questions. Have a wonderful day.

Appendix D: Sample of Initial Codes

Date: 12/06/20

Participant: [REDACTED]

Pseudonym: [REDACTED]

First Interview ☒ Second Interview ☐

-teaching an online course -met with the chair of the department -pretty intimidating -understood online education -I understand what students need -I counseled children, adolescents and families. -ease in with that course. -teach in any environments -thankful for my experiences -meeting the needs of the students -I'm really effective at communicating -support that I received -I felt like he innately trusted me -I found that he was readily available. -mentorship is extremely valuable -she really took the time to meet with me -wanted questions from me -it wasn't dominated by her own agenda. - wasn't even in the counseling department ALONE	- helped me develop my own, teaching style - just get in there - obviously I made mistakes - Oh, I shouldn't have done that DOUBT - And how can you grow from it? - growth mindset. GROWTH - space for me to learn about myself as an educator - Hey, is everything going okay? REASSURANCE - built a really close relationship with her - she trusted me - I know I had support from her - a multitude of roles - to learn more about myself and my style LEARNING - I was able to learn something from it and grow from it. - a lot of administrative changes DYSFUNCTION? - wasn't as applicable to being a counselor educator	- I missed out - my dad - counselor identity, as well as my educator identity INTERTWINED - learn and bounce ideas off. - they've made mistakes TOGETHER - I don't know what to do here - being able to kind of empathize TOGETHER - She called me right away -I accept them for who they are, - I could be autonomous in my decision-making, - I have received a tremendous amount of mentorship - I can make those decisions. - I can reach out and continue to seek that support from --what did I need for my own development -I wasn't just doing teaching her being able to create that space
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Thoughts, notes, considerations

Need to be mindful of time for follow up interview

Strong sense of confidence. Was that resignation towards program? Was it then and it's changed now?

Lots of background experience. Identifies strongly as a counselor.

Passionate about mentorship. Its everywhere.

Vita

Wesley Charles Allen was born in Baltimore, Maryland, on April 7th, 1990. He earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Psychology from the Georgia College and State University and a Masters of Science degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling from the University of North Georgia. Prior to his doctoral studies, Wes worked as a licensed professional counselor offering counseling services to individuals, groups, and families. He has worked as an instructor for undergraduate and graduate level courses. Currently, Wes is working as a licensed professional counselor in a private practice and enjoys the opportunity to be helpful to his clients. Wes will graduate with a Ph.D. in Counselor Education in May 2021.