

**Effective Teaching Practices in the Education of Counselors: A  
Systematic Literature Review**

A Dissertation Presented for the  
Doctor of Philosophy  
Degree  
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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this dissertation to all internationals living abroad, people who made the hard decision to go far across seas, worlds, and borders to make life a meaningful journey. This is a choice that requires courage. Most specifically, I dedicate this dissertation to all international counselors and counselor educators living, working, and contributing to the counseling profession in the U.S. This dedication is a tribute to your resilience, compassion, and unwavering belief in the power of counseling to transform lives. It is an honor to be on board with you.

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## ABSTRACT

It is critical for counselor education (CE) to increase knowledge in effective teaching practices specific to CE (ETP-CE) in order to prepare counselors optimally. Research in higher education has established the significance of instructor factors (IF) in enhancing instructor-student relationship, predicting instructors' self-efficacy, and informing quality teaching. However, the literature specific to ETP-CE reveals a limited focus on the connections of IF to counseling students learning and development and has yet fully addressed the complexities and nuances of IF in CE. This highlights the need for further research investigating the roles of IF in CE to fill this gap and advance the understanding of ETP-CE. Additionally, the growing presence of CE international faculty members (CE-IFM) brings new perspectives and contributions to ETP-CE. Based on this, the aim of this study is to explore the role of IF in counseling students' learning and development through the perspectives of CE-IFM. A qualitative inquiry was conducted involving 10 CE-IFM with experience teaching master's degree courses in CACREP-accredited programs. Six major themes related to instructor factors emerged from the data and reveals that IF are multifaceted, reflect instructors' identities, are pervasive across all teaching related actions, and require intentionality to be effectively articulated to activate the learning community and benefit the teaching and learning process. The implications of this study provide suggestions for strengthening the body of research in ETC-CE and improving the preparation of emerging counselors.

*Keywords:* counselor education, counseling, effective teaching practices, instructor factors, international faculty members

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## INTRODUCTION

Instructors, researchers, programs, and professional organizations in the field of counselor education (CE) dedicate significant efforts to adequately preparing future counselors for their multifaceted work. A study by Barrio Minton et al. (2018) compared publications regarding the teaching of counselors between 2011-2015 and 2001-2010, revealing a 21.80% growth in the number of articles grounded in teaching methodologies and resources. This shift in focus indicates a movement from what should be taught to how CE content should be approached and delivered.

The Association for Counselor Educators and Supervisors (ACES) efforts in advancing knowledge on CE instruction through initiatives such Teaching Initiative Taskforce (2016) and, more recently, ACES Teaching Practice Briefs led to the development of practical guidelines for instructional strategies tailored to teaching in CE. However, there are still many aspects of counseling teaching and learning that require further exploration to advance effective teaching practices within CE (ETP-CE).

Specifically, a systematic literature review addressing in-person delivery of content courses in the master's level counseling programs from 2010 to 2022 including 70 publications (Lazarim & Cochran, 2023) demonstrated areas in which CE instructional research should advance, including the specific need to more directly examine the roles of instructor factors (IF), including instructor characteristics, backgrounds, and identities, as well as the impact of instructor-student relationships in educating counselors.

Higher education literature has demonstrated the influence of IF on instructor-student relationships and students motivation, engagement, achievement, and grades (Sogunro, 2017; Vliegler, 2018). Although quality studies examined the complexities of

IF in counseling teaching and learning (e.g., Buller, 2016; Gobulovic et al., 2019; Hurt-Avila et al., 2021), the exploration of IF in CE is partial and not directly tied to ETP-CE. Thus, there is a need for a better understanding of the essential IF that contributes to counseling teaching, clarifying how IF varies across contexts and student populations (e.g., specific skills, knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors of instructors), and more effectively mapping the interactions between IF and student factors.

CE international faculty members with (CE-IFM) are a growing group within the United States (U.S.) who bring diverse perspectives to the CE profession and the education of counselors. Specifically, CE-IFM productivity results in important financial and scholarly contributions to academia (Interiano-Shiverdecker et al., 2022; Joshi et al., 2023). Nonetheless, only a limited number of studies have focused on CE-IFM (e.g., Attia, 2021; Interiano-Shiverdecker et al., 2022; Joshi, 2023; Ng et al., 2022). These authors' findings bring insights about the value of the cultural diversity within this group, the need to retain these professionals in the U.S., and about what CE-IFM can add to the field. There is a urgency to better explore this cultural group's professional expertise and contributions to the counseling profession in the U.S.

In light of the need to explore the benefits of IF for ETP-CE and considering the relevance of CE-IFM, the purpose of this qualitative inquiry study was to better understand the perceptions of CE-IFM regarding the role of IF in the education of counselors. We examined the perspectives of 10 CE-IFM teaching master's degree students in the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP, 2016) accredited programs. The participants in this study provided insights into the competence of CE instructors and contributed to the comprehension of

IF as a construct for teaching practice. The findings of this study specially supported the notion that IF is an important element informing ETP-CE.

# **CHAPTER I**

## **EFFECTIVE TEACHING PRACTICES IN THE EDUCATION OF COUNSELORS: A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW**

## **Abstract**

To prepare optimally effective counselors, instructors of counseling students need to know what works best and why. There is a growing body of studies regarding best teaching practices for the education of counselors. Therefore, this is an opportune moment to summarize what is known about effective teaching practices in counselor education (ETP-CE). This manuscript presents the findings of a systematic literature review of data-based or empirical studies published in the United States from 2010 to 2022, specifically examining in-person teaching delivery in diverse content courses within master's programs for counselors in CACREP-accredited programs. The 70 studies reviewed fall into two major categories, teaching methodologies and teaching resources, with nine themes across the two categories. The findings of this review revealed strengths and gaps in the existing body of studies, a predominance of publications on teaching resources, a limited number of studies applying teaching methodologies or learning theories, and a need for studies directly exploring the roles of instructor factors and instructor-student relationship in educating counselors. The manuscript's implications provide suggestions for growth areas to strengthen the body of research in ETP-CE.

*Keywords:* Counselor education, counseling, effective teaching practices

## **Effective Teaching Practices in the Education of Counselors: A Systematic Literature Review**

The literature regarding the teaching of counselors is growing rapidly (La Guardia, 2020; Barrio Minton & Hightower, 2020). The Association for Counselor Educators and Supervisors (ACES) has played an important role in this area, first organizing the Teaching Initiative Taskforce (2016) and currently making ongoing efforts through ACES Teaching Practice Briefs. Yet, experts stressed that only a limited number of publications address instructor effectiveness or the quality of teaching tied to foundational education of counselors (Baltrinic & Morris, 2020; Barrio Minton, 2019; Barrio Minton et al., 2018; La Guardia, 2020). In particular, Barrio Minton and Hightower (2020) identified that the scholarly work on CE teaching primarily focused on evaluating teaching or training methods, developing new curricula, and exploring teaching in specific courses, and suggested that researchers should undertake a more sophisticated analysis of CE teaching practices.

Thus, there is a need to advance effective teaching practices within CE (ETP-CE), and CE authors suggest many directions such studies should take. For example, Baltrinic and Morris (2020) emphasized the potential for developing signature pedagogies specific to CE, providing teaching approaches tailored to the needs of learners in the profession. Barrio Minton (2020) proposed that exploring the foundational knowledge of effective teaching in general would benefit the field of CE, while acknowledging that certain areas of doctoral teaching training and programs were prepared for signature pedagogy. While some authors discussed avenues through a pedagogical lens, others asserted that CE should be rooted in andragogical or adult learning approaches, and/or that CE already has

useful frameworks, such as the multicultural and social justice counseling frame that should be better explored by CE researchers (Chang & Rabess, 2020).

Despite the efforts of various authors and initiatives in centralizing the importance of CE instruction, there is a specific need to better understand the role of teaching methodologies – combinations of diverse teaching practices and theories as systems that support teaching goals and learning objectives, and teaching resources, – that are teaching techniques, strategies, activities, and/or tools that boost specific objectives for students' learning and development. Swank and Houseknecht (2019) emphasized the discrepancy in teaching methods and student experiences, arguing that instructional quality in CE should be central to all entry-level areas of CE core courses. These authors described four domains of CE competencies that should be present in all teaching: knowledge, skills, dispositions, and behaviors.

Given the calls for further research in potential gap areas of ETP-CE, the growing body of studies, the differing perspectives regarding best directions for research in CE teaching, the need for better understanding of the roles of teaching methodologies and resources, the opportunity to identify how content is best delivered for counseling students, and find unique qualities in the teaching of counselors, it is relevant to take stock of the current knowledge of ETP-CE. Therefore, our purpose in this systematic literature review was identifying what the strengths and gaps in knowledge of ETP-CE are and providing insight into directions for new research. We conducted a review of ETP-CE based on 70 studies published between 2010 and 2022 about the teaching of counselors in content courses within the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP, 2016).

## **Review Procedures**

This review was based on the recommendations of Boote and Beile (2005) for systematic theme grouping. Systematic literature review is a critical assessment of available research on a topic with clear inclusion criteria to ensure replicability (Onwuegbuzie & Weinbaum, 2017). The inclusion criteria for this review were: empirical studies, published in the United States from 2010 to 2022, of in-person content courses at the entry level counseling courses and/or publications on counseling teaching practices cutting across CE courses with CACREP (2016) programs. We excluded practicums and internships, as these are professional practice courses.

We defined the terminology within the inclusion criteria established for this review in several ways: Based on the term “empirical,” we included in this study only data-based/research-based publications and excluded books, book chapters, conceptual, theoretical, or expository productions, as other systematic reviews. The date range of 12 years encompassed the years that this area of research presented a rapid growth in the number of publications. The term “in-person” referred to studies of instruction that included counseling courses that were synchronous in-person or had technology-based or online components but excluded courses that were fully delivered online. The term “effective” referred to the outcomes of competent or quality teaching related to how the curriculum was delivered, thus excluding studies of what the curriculum should include. By “entry level counseling students,” we referred to counseling masters’ students, thus excluding CE courses delivered to doctoral students. The review focused on teaching practices that cut across the curriculum and connected to teaching methodologies or the

use of specific teaching resources to support instructors' approaches within any counseling course at the masters' level.

Further, we defined the scope of ETP-CE based on the Hill et al. (2014) definition of effective teaching in higher education, including three main categories: teaching competence (i.e., being the content expert), relationships with students (i.e., being connected and focused on the best interests of students), and teacher attitudes (i.e., modeling actions and respect regarding teaching and learning). We applied the inclusion criteria to a search of the following databases: Academic Search Complete (ASC), Eric, Libraries A-Z, PsycINFO, PsycARTICLES, Web of Science, Google Scholar, and Trace Dissertation searches, using 19 ( $n = 19$ ) main search terms combined in multiple ways. The terms were: counselor education; counselor; education; counseling; instruction; teaching; learning; best practices, effective; teaching effectiveness; effective teaching practices; pedagogy; signature pedagogy; learning theory; teaching framework; teaching methods; teaching strategies; pedagogical tools; and creativity in the classroom.

### **Review of Literature**

The application of the criteria for this literature review yielded 70 publications sorted into two major categories and a total of nine themes. The first category, teaching methodologies, consisted of 31 ( $n = 31$ ) publications across four ( $n = 4$ ) themes. The second category, teaching resources, included 39 ( $n = 39$ ) publications across five ( $n = 5$ ) themes. The reviewed publications encompassed a variety of research designs addressing two main populations – students ( $n = 58$ ) and instructors ( $n = 12$ ), with 49 ( $n = 49$ ) qualitative research studies; 16 ( $n = 16$ ) quantitative research studies; and five ( $n = 5$ ) mixed methods studies. See Table 1 for the articles included in this study.

**Table 1***Research Reviewed by Authors, Modality, Scope, and Population*

Authors	Qualitative ( <i>n</i> = 49)	Sample	Content Scope
Adams (2019)	Case study	3 instructors	Teaching trauma courses
Atkins and Lorelle (2022)	Narrative inquiry	21 students	Journal entries
Autry and Walker (2011)	Case study	15 students	Artistic representation
Baquet and Hill (2022)	Phenomenological analysis	4 students	Cross-cultural distance dialogues
Boecker et al. (2016)	Grounded theory	20 students	Mindfulness experiential small group
Bradley (2013)	Case study	3 instructors	Self-care
Buller (2016)	Qualitative study	10 instructors	Qualities of instructors
Buser et al. (2013)	Qualitative study	39 students	Life-mapping/spirituality teaching
Buser et al. (2011)	Qualitative study	54 students	The use of SCAMPER for teaching
Chen et al. (2019)	Qualitative study	students	Self-care rubric
Davidson et al. (2022)	Content analysis	10 students	Writing reflections in group course
Diambra et al. (2016)	Content analysis	students	Teaching sections of a human sexuality
Dollarhide (2013)	Action research	21 students	Affective domain Bloom's taxonomy
Duffy et al. (2016)	Interpretative study	23 students	Mindful-based learning
Duffy et al. (2017)	Interpretative study	2 students	Metaphoric story creation activity
Fye and Baltrinic (2020)	Phenomenological inquiry	11 students	Learning about wellness
Golubovic et al. (2021)	Grounded theory	13 instructors	Experiential approach
Erby (2019)	Phenomenological study	49 students	Experiential group in multicultural counseling
Gonzales -Voller et al (2020)	Longitudinal design	4 students	Multicultural competence
Hall et al. (2018)	Phenomenological study	24 students	The use of RCT in a group counseling
Ieva et al. (2010)	Qualitative study	15 students	Experiential group
Karayigit and Ozier (2021)	Qualitative study	21 students	Journaling in a multicultural course
Kiweewa et al (2018)	Critical Incidents study	4 instructors	Experiential training groups
King (2020)	Narrative analysis	2 students	Cultural immersion exercise
Knoblich and Camp (2018)	Case study	10 students	Flipped classroom model
Lee and Kelley-Petersen's (2018)	Content analysis	40 students	Service-learning

**Table 1 continued**

Authors	Qualitative ( <i>n</i> = 49)	Sample	Content Scope
Liu et al. (2021)	Case study	14 students	Intrapersonal and interpersonal development
Luke and Kiweewa (2010)	Grounded theory	14 students	Personal growth in experiential group
Lenes et al. (2015)	Phenomenological study	12 students	Music videos as a prompt
McCarthy and French (2017)	Qualitative study	19 students	Video case-based learning
McGhee et al. (2019)	Phenomenological study	10 instructors	creative teaching approach
Merlin-Knoblich and Camp (2019)	Case study	10 students	Flipped classroom model
Merrel-James et al. (2019)	Phenomenological study	12 students	Cultural Immersion and Service-Learning Experiences
Minor et al. (2013)	Grounded theory	5 students	Peer-to-peer music exchange
Moran and Milson (2015)	Case study	15 students	The use of flipped classroom model
Ng et al. (2022)	Autoethnography study	7 instructors	Anti-racist teaching
Nittoli and Guiffrida (2018)	Action research	18 students	The use of movies in a multicultural counseling course
Paone et al. (2018)	Qualitative study	20 students	The use of photovoice
Pollard-Kosidowski et al. (2021)	Content analysis	7 students	Emotional experience in group
Renfro-Michel et al. (2010)	Qualitative study	14 students	Using technology to enhance learning
Rowell et al. (2021)	Consensual study	9 students	Experiential group counseling
Sanabria and Delorenzi (2019)	Group focus study	8 students	Course for community advocacy
Schmidt and Adkins (2012)	Phenomenological study	6 students/3 instructors	Teaching reflection
Trahan and Keim (2019)	Multicase study	9 instructors	Infusing multiculturalism in teaching
Thompson and Bridges (2019)	Qualitative study	7 instructors	Instructors background in multicultural education
Varney et al. (2020)	Phenomenological study	6 students	Students of color in experiential groups
Vela et al. (2019)	Qualitative inquiry	6 students	Latina students learning preferences
William et al (2021)	Qualitative self-study	3 instructors	Black counselor educators adopting anti-racist teaching
Zeglin et al. (2019)	Pilot qualitative study	7 students	Benefits of photovoice
Authors	Quantitative ( <i>n</i> = 16)	Sample	Content Scope
Fulton and Gonzales (2015)	Exploratory study	58 students	Flipped classroom model
Gallo et al. (2019)	Quantitative study	32 students	Youth suicide prevention course

**Table 1 continued**

Authors	Quantitative ( $n = 16$ )	Sample	Content Scope
Kondili et al. (2022)	Correlational study	164 students	Cultural humility development
Lee and McAdams (2019)	Quasi-study	25 students	Perception of social justice in service-learning
Estrada and Rigali-Oiler (2016)	Quantitative study	174 students	Perceptions of teaching alliance
King et al. (2019)	Quantitative study	70 students	Cultural immersion
Merlin-Knoblich et al. (2020)	Quasi-study	93 students	Flipped classroom model
Merlin-Knoblich et al. (2019)	Causal comparative analysis	67 students	Flipped classroom model
Midgett et al. (2016)	Quantitative study	20 students	Self-efficacy for group leadership
Oh et al. (2018)	Quasi-experimental study	24 students	Journal sharing in experiential groups
Osborn and Costas (2013)	Quantitative study	27 students	Role play in creative teaching
Pietrantonio and Glance (2018)	Quantitative study	169 students	Multicultural competence training
Shannonhouse et al. (2018)	Quantitative study	62 instructors	Multicultural preparation
Xiang and Lu's (2021)	Quantitative study	113 instructors	Instructors teaching group counseling
Young et al. (2013)	Quantitative study	43 students	Experiential growth groups
Wood et al. (2021)	Quantitative study	25 students	Using creative techniques in teaching
Authors	Mixed Methods ( $n = 5$ )	Sample	Content Scope
Dye et al. (2020)	Mixed method	32 students	Mindfulness training
Hurt-Avila et al. (2020)	Mixed Q sort study	48 students	Teaching Disposition
Pieterse et al. (2016)	Mixed method	131 students	Racial group membership
Steen et al. (2014)	Mixed method	25 students	Journaling in experiential groups
Zelege et al. (2017)	Mixed method	26 students	Self-regulated learning

*Note: List of types of research based on design loading*

During the categorization process of this review, we classified studies under teaching methodologies rather than teaching resources if the study addressed an educational system as a whole, encompassing a combination of teaching elements. Conversely, we categorized studies as teaching resources if they primarily focused on providing specific tools, strategies, activities, or other similar resources for teaching.

### **Teaching Methodologies**

Teaching methodologies include the combinations of teaching practices as systems that are a deductive process and constitute the guiding principles of what an instructor believes will accomplish – the course teaching goals and learning objectives for students – to optimize students’ development (Colomer et al., 2020; Graham & Longchamps, 2022). Teaching methodologies serve as mechanisms to organize and implement educational means and include how instructors teach, instructors’ beliefs and teaching philosophy, and a specific combination of theories (e.g., constructivism, behaviorism), assumptions, methods, techniques, and strategies.

The 31 ( $n = 31$ ) publications within this category included persistent reports of four modalities of methodological emphasis on teaching, allocated into the following themes: cultural lens in content courses ( $n = 15$ ); framing experiential learning ( $n = 7$ ); flipped classroom model (FCM) ( $n = 5$ ); and community-based teaching-learning ( $n = 4$ ). See Table 2 for the theme's main outcomes.

**Table 2***The Reviewed Literature's Main Outcomes by Themes*

Category	Themes' Outcomes
Teaching	Theme 1: Cultural Lens in Content Courses ( $n = 15$ )
Methodologies ( $n = 31$ )	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Methodologies applied to fostering MSJCC learning, mostly in the context of multicultural counseling courses using diverse perspectives</li> </ul> Theme 2: Framing Learning Experience ( $n = 7$ ) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Methodologies applied to framing the learning experience by integrating experiential learning to dispositional and relational emphasis.</li> </ul> Theme 3: Flipped Classroom Model ( $n = 5$ ) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Methodology applied to enhancing time for class interactions and peers-instruction experience using inclusive opportunity for students making meaning of their learning</li> </ul> Theme 4: Community Based Teaching-Learning ( $n = 4$ ) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Methodology applied to promoting the extension of class learning</li> </ul>
Teaching	Theme 1: Group Work Training ( $n = 14$ )
Resources ( $n = 39$ )	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Group resources to promote self-exploration and group counseling learning (e.g., journaling about group participation, interdisciplinary group participation)</li> </ul> Theme 2: Creative Arts in Teaching ( $n = 11$ ) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Art-based resources to enhance/deepen specific learnings with courses (e.g., use of movies, metaphors)</li> </ul> Theme 3: Specific Teaching Enactment ( $n = 7$ ) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Specific activation to promote the learning of specific contents (e.g., cross cultural distance dialog strategy, tool of self-regulated learning)</li> </ul> Theme 4: Integrating Self-Care ( $n = 5$ ) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Wellness resources activation to incorporate self-care activities/practice. (e.g., mindfulness exercise, wellness-cohort project)</li> </ul> Theme 5: Technology within teaching ( $n = 2$ ) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Technological resources application to expand class activities (e.g., simulations)</li> </ul>

*Note.* The thematic attributes were grouped based on Boote and Beile (2005).

### *Cultural Lens in Content Courses*

Cultural lens in content courses was the most prevalent theme in the teaching methodologies category, comprising 15 ( $n = 15$ ) publications. In this theme, authors presented an emphasis on the development of cultural awareness and multicultural and social justice counseling competencies (MSJCC) with students. The discussions within these studies centered on the four domains highlighted by Ratts et al. (2015) as crucial for the preparation of counselors: self-awareness, worldview, relationship, and advocacy.

Research in this theme emphasized core multicultural and social justice-oriented education mostly in the context of multicultural counseling courses using diverse perspectives. Pietrantoni & Glance (2018) identified several factors relevant to perceived multicultural competence among students, including socially desirable responses, the number of multicultural courses attended, and training level; they suggested instructors should increase the presence of courses and experiences that incorporate multicultural content throughout the CE curriculum. Cultural immersion appears to be effective, with students reporting improved multicultural competencies (Atkins & Lorelle, 2022) and others reporting gains following their participation in long-term multicultural learning experience spanning three years (Gonzalez-Voller et al., 2020). Furthermore, students expressed diverse emotional experiences as relevant outcomes of their learning experiences in multicultural training, particularly when using an immersive approach (King et al., 2019).

The topic of international cultural immersion as a methodology for multicultural teaching and learning was salient within this theme. Merrel-James et al. (2019) found that international cultural immersion and service-learning provided an optimal environment

for promoting self-awareness and multicultural competence in CE programs through multiple interactions. However, Shannonhouse et al. (2018) expressed concerns regarding the preparation, implementation, and evaluation of cultural immersion programs in their study. They raised issues related to student personalization, depth of contact, guided processing, and outcome assessments.

The engagement in cultural immersion exercises and other forms of multicultural training across racial differences can potentially be sensitive for students who self-identify as minorities. King (2020) found that students from minority identities faced particular challenges when reflecting upon internal biases and power dynamics, especially when they found themselves immersed in the dominant culture. However, these students also demonstrated flexible thinking and layered emotions, suggesting the need for attention from CE instructors.

The significance of addressing racial group membership and the emotions associated with multicultural training was highlighted in Pieterse et al. (2016)'s study, revealing differential impacts on white students and students of color. The authors emphasized the importance of instructors incorporating discussions on racial group membership within multicultural methodologies to create a sense of safety and to assist students in navigating racial salience and negative racial experiences, as well as developing resources to manage associated emotions. Drawing parallels to cultural immersion, various activities involving interactions in groups emerged as effective methodology for multicultural counseling teaching. Erby (2019) illustrated that providing opportunities for group activities, ensuring a conducive environment, and considering

social location were all instrumental in enhancing insights and promoting the development of MSJCC among counseling students.

Within this theme, specific topics related to multicultural education focused on the learning of dispositions and intersectional self-studies; these discussions asserted that effective multicultural education plays a significant role in nurturing cultural humility. Based on this, Dollarhide (2013) demonstrated the effectiveness of teaching values and dispositions, such as respect for diversity and client privacy, through the utilization of the affective domain of Bloom's taxonomy in a multicultural counseling course. This approach aimed to support the integration of cognitive learning with the internalization of values; the author emphasized that CE programs have neglected the inclusion of the affective domain as a crucial aspect of their foundational education. Kondili et al. (2022) found that students who engaged in higher levels of interaction with multicultural concepts, particularly by completing more multicultural courses, demonstrated greater development in cultural humility.

Ng et al. (2022) exposed the effectiveness of using the instructor's personhood (use of self) as a tool for anti-racist teaching, highlighting its potential as a valuable methodology for enhancing multicultural learning within the CE curriculum. The authors acknowledged the inherent stress associated with anti-racist teaching, the challenges involved in adopting a use-of-self perspective, and the importance of maintaining a balanced approach when employing self-disclosure with students; they further emphasized that faculty of color encounter additional obstacles while implementing anti-racist teaching. These findings align with the conclusions of Williams et al. (2021) that

reinforced the necessity of deliberate efforts to address racism and oppression in CE core courses, while also emphasizing the importance of self-reflexivity.

This theme also made evident that cultural lens through content courses and utilizing intersectionality as a methodology can serve as a foundational approach to teaching counseling students how to activate MSJCC. Thompson and Bridges (2019) revealed that instructors who identified their personal experiences with privilege and oppression and who deliberately integrated intersectionality into their teaching practices facilitated systemic learning and promoted the development of multicultural competence among their students. In their study, Trahan and Keim (2019) observed instructors who fostered a culturally inclusive classroom environment were able to adapt their teaching practices to meet the specific needs of their counseling students. By actively assuming this role, they effectively supported their students' learning and development as more culturally responsive counselors.

### ***Framing the Learning Experience***

The second theme in size, framing the learning experience, consisted of seven ( $n = 7$ ) studies. This theme entailed experiential learning through instructor-designed activities, where instructors play a crucial role in activating dispositional elements and relational skills to create learning experiences that benefit the learning community. Instead of relying on direct instruction, the emphasis is on engaging learners through experiential approaches.

Publications in this theme pointed out the effects of experiential learning tied to essential dispositions and meaningful instructor-student relationships. Students' preferences for instructors who focused on experiential teaching was persistent with this

theme and related to instructors' dispositions and the type of relationship they had with students. Vela et al. (2019) demonstrated that students who identify as Latina expressed a preference for dynamic teaching and active learning and for instructor passion (for the subject and for student learning) and care (for students and for their needs). Similarly, Gallo et al. (2019) emphasized the importance of experiential learning for students from diverse backgrounds within the context of a youth suicide prevention course. Based on the views of instructors, Golubovic et al. (2021) evidenced the significance of incorporating an experiential approach in addiction counseling courses. Additionally, Estrada and Rigali-Oiler (2016) mapped in their study regarding students' perceptions teaching alliance that students mainly considered connection through alliance as highly important for their foundational learning in multicultural counseling.

Practices tying dispositions and didactic teaching were deemed particularly relevant. In relation to didactic teaching, certain practices were deemed particularly significant. According to Buller (2016), instructors identified seven highly effective teaching practices: pride in teaching, care for students, ability to challenge students, authenticity, passion for teaching, organization, and creativity. Instructors of trauma courses, as revealed by Adams (2019), emphasized the importance of incorporating both didactic and experiential approaches in their teaching. Furthermore, the study findings demonstrated that instructors' personal identities played a major role in influencing their choice of content and instructional approach to enhance the understanding of trauma and to facilitate the learning of trauma-related interventions.

In line with the definition of this theme, Hurt-Avila et al. (2020), in a Q-sort study on preferences for instructors' style with students from randomly selected programs,

revealed that students had varying preferences for specific instructor factors: 40% of students preferred factors related to experiential learning and meaningful assignments, 33% chose for factors tied to knowledge orientation and organization, 31% prioritized factors linked dispositions and investment on students, and 21% decided on factors that connected to practical applications. These interconnected but distinct main factors presented some overlaps of preferences, such as content orientation plus affect-orientation, attending emotional safety and skills development, professional/personal care, encouragement and non-judgment.

### ***Flipped Classroom Model (FCM)***

The third theme identified in this review was the flipped classroom model (FCM), which focuses on delivering theoretical course content outside of class meetings. This is typically achieved through assigned readings and recorded lectures, allowing for in-person class time to be dedicated to experiential and relational activities (Keengwe et al., 2014). There were five ( $n = 5$ ) publications in this theme that specifically examined the effectiveness of the FCM in counseling courses.

The FCM appears to be effective in promoting engaged learning by providing multiple opportunities for interactions within the learning community. In a study conducted by Fulton and Gonzales (2015), the majority of students exhibited positive attitudes toward career development courses delivered through FCM: they reported increased confidence in tasks related to career counseling. However, a small number of students expressed frustration with the pre-class activities associated with the flipped approach. The effectiveness of the FCM was also observed in students enrolled in foundations of school counseling courses. The findings indicated that the majority of

participants reported positive experiences and active participation in the experiential activities (Moran & Milson, 2015).

Students have also reported greater enjoyment, multiple benefits, and better learning in FCM courses compared to more traditional courses (Merlin-Knoblich & Camp, 2018). In a study by Merlin-Knoblich et al. (2019) comparing students' engagement in FCM and non-FCM counseling courses, it was evident that FCM promoted higher classroom engagement due to the experiential opportunities it provided. These authors pointed out the importance of conducting further research to gain a better understanding of whether the preference for flipped learning is influenced by or varies based on student characteristics and factors. In another study, comparison of students' engagement in FCM, active lecture, and online counseling course sections revealed the benefits of FCM in terms of motivation, self-efficacy, and learning performance (Merlin-Knoblich et al., 2022).

### ***Community-Based Teaching and Learning***

The final theme in this category was community-based teaching-learning, consisting of four ( $n = 4$ ) studies. This theme focused on teaching-learning approaches that extend beyond the classroom, engaging students as active participants in communities and fostering the development of civic knowledge and specific skills.

The studies within this theme emphasized that service learning used as a methodology of teaching may suit counseling students' preparation as a complementary approach to in-class learning, contributing to their social justice development. Students' positive experiences regarding their engagement with the community as part of human development courses (Lee & Kelley-Petersen, 2018) included reports of growth in

perceptions of themselves, awareness of others, and social justice learning. Similarly, another study revealed that students had their perception of social justice in counseling shifted and felt better prepared for their future practices within communities as they engaged in service-learning activities (Lee & McAdams, 2019). Midgett et al. (2016) also identified that the experience of service-learning facilitated students' self-efficacy for group leadership and growth in multicultural competence but did not change multicultural awareness within participants and suggested advanced studies on this approach.

Sanabria and Delorenzi (2019) found that in a social justice course created to promote direct community engagement for advocacy with groups in the community, students presented increased appreciation for the advocacy work itself, improved self-confidence in implementing the advocacy work, and superior understanding of social inequities.

### **Teaching Resources**

Teaching resources encompass various techniques, strategies, activities, and tools that are utilized to support specific learning objectives with students, typically within a particular teaching context (Larson & Lockee, 2020; Smith & Baik, 2021; Nilson, 2016). In categorizing publications for this review, we included studies under teaching resources rather than teaching methodologies if the study addressed the use of specific resources in specific contexts versus teaching approaches that could be applied across the curriculum for counseling students.

The literature in this category included 39 ( $n = 39$ ) studies divided into five main themes: group work training ( $n = 14$ ); creative arts in teaching ( $n = 11$ ); specific teaching

enactment ( $n = 7$ ); integrating self-care ( $n = 5$ ); and technology within teaching ( $n = 2$ ). See Table 2 for the theme's main outcomes.

### ***Group Work Training***

Group work training was the largest theme of the teaching resources category comparatively to the others, with a total of 14 studies ( $n = 14$ ). This theme included studies of experiential group activities that supported student learning and development in group counseling courses.

The publications in this theme explored the diverse strategies employed by instructors and the common methods or specific activities utilized to set up effectiveness in group work. A national survey of instructors teaching group counseling courses found variety in the instructors' backgrounds, program structures, curricula, and setup of the group work experiential component (Xiang & Lu, 2021). Ten students' written reflections completed during a 15-week group dynamics and methods course evidenced that students considered the use of Bloom's revised cognitive taxonomy levels to access their learning and remembering useful while also leading to cognitive complexity (Davidson et al., 2022).

Young et al. (2013) found that students who attended experiential groups as part of their group counseling courses met the learning requirements of essential group processes, including group development, therapeutic factors, and personal growth behaviors through their participation. In somewhat contradictory findings, Pollard-Kosidowski et al. (2021) identified that students observed their experiential group provided them with an emotional experience that affected their learning, yet they felt lacking in preparation to lead groups.

The perceptions of students who completed a semester-long experiential group within a group counseling course provided a better understanding of 30 factors seen as significant to students' personal growth and awareness, supporting the notion that students develop in multiple directions through group participation (Luke & Kiweewa, 2010). Similarly, Rowell et al. (2021) found that in 9-week experiential group students experienced impactful moments in cognitive, affective, behavioral, and observational domains, concluding that integrating personal and professional growth in group counseling courses is an essential prerequisite for future professional practice. Further, Kiweewa et al. (2018) demonstrated students' progress using Tuckman's model of group development and identified that discovering similarities with other group members contributed to personal growth and awareness. Self-awareness, personal growth, and professional development emerged as positive aspects of student development through experiential groups (Ieva et al., 2010). In a similar study, Liu et al. (2021) found both intrapersonal and interpersonal development within students' experiences.

Experiential groups may be particularly challenging for students of color and other minority students. A study exploring the experiences of students of color in such groups within group counseling courses demonstrated that these experiences can be sensitive for these students and that CE programs should prioritize cultural competence development with students (Varney et al., 2020).

Journaling along with experiential growth groups may be a powerful strategy to boost students' learning and development. Steen et al. (2014) found that allowing students to read and share journal entries strengthened group cohesion, particularly during the early stages of group formation. When conducting a similar study on journal

sharing in experiential growth groups, Oh et al. (2018) also observed that students experienced increased cohesion as a result of sharing their journal entries.

Experiential group activities seem to benefit the teaching and learning of unique topics within group work training, as examined by Hall et al. (2018)'s study; students declared that the use of relational-cultural theory in a group counseling course facilitated their comprehension of relational concepts. The reports of students' experiences in mindfulness group training suggested that this practice helped increase self-reflection skills and their capacity to manage cognitive complexity (Bohecker et al., 2016).

### ***Creative Arts in Teaching***

Creative arts in teaching ranked the second biggest theme within the category, with 11 publications ( $n = 11$ ). This theme examined studies using creative arts as a targeted teaching tool for specific teaching purposes rather than its broader applications for students' development or in connection to andragogical or pedagogical frameworks or methodologies.

The publications in this theme highlighted the varied utilization of art-based devices in the education of counselors, with a primary focus on students' perspectives. Among these studies, McGhee et al. (2019) specifically explored instructors' experience using creative teaching strategies with findings suggesting that while this approach can benefit student engagement, it also requires instructors to establish connection and take risks in their teaching practices. The use of artistic representation in an introductory counseling class changed students' approaches to self-reflection in positive ways (Autry and Walker, 2011), while use of the SCAMPER model, a technique for increasing creativity, offered a framework that assisted students in stretching their creative thinking

linked to intervention development for case analysis. In another study, Buser et al. (2013) explored the use of life-mapping as a creative technique to teach spirituality and found conflicting outcomes: students had diverse perspectives, with some expressing the suitability and benefits of the creative intervention, while others expressing aversion to the topic itself. On the other hand, students in another study found the use of metaphoric story creation activities helpful in making meaning of their class experiences and facilitating a deeper understanding of their developmental paths (Duffy et al., 2017).

The specific use of music, movies, and photovoice as creative techniques boosting learning emerged with this theme. Lenes et al. (2015) found that the use of music videos as a prompt for students to write original lyrics about sexuality in a human sexuality course fostered a sense of vulnerability, created a comfortable space for discussing the topic, and promoted emotional connection with students. In another study by Minor et al. (2013), students declared that the use of a peer-to-peer music exchange technique for cohort development enhanced their connections to self and others. Nittoli and Guiffrida (2018) demonstrated that students considered the use of the movies *Crash* and *Precious* important for learning and engagement on difficult conversations of the multicultural course. Paone et al. (2018) ascertained that photovoice was a helpful technique for deepening learning and processing emotional reactions in a multicultural counseling course. Zeglin et al. (2019) also demonstrated the benefits of photovoice for learning in counseling techniques courses, with students reporting that the assignment was enjoyable and helpful. Meanwhile, Wood et al. (2021), using a range of creative techniques to teach existential theory, discovered a significant increase in students' knowledge of existential

concepts, with students ranking the use of music and lyrics highly helpful, followed by film and/or TV shows.

### ***Specific Teaching Enactment***

Specific teaching enactment was the third theme in the context of teaching resources. This theme included seven ( $n = 7$ ) studies in which authors investigated a specific or unique teaching tool applied in the context of a particular course.

Studies examining the use of specific tools in multicultural counseling and social justice courses to enhance cultural awareness, competency, empathy, and interpersonal skills included Baquet and Hill (2022), who explored cross-cultural distance dialog. Their study focused on inter-university peer connections, emphasizing interactions with students from different cultural groups. Karayigit and Ozier (2021) investigated the tool of character connection journaling, where students used characters from a novel or movie to embody someone representative of a different cultural group, particularly during a period of social distancing. Zeleke et al. (2017) utilized the tool of self-regulated learning, where students took control of their own cultural learning through planning and monitoring. Gonzales et al. (2019) also explored novel course learning tools to facilitate the understanding of the principles of social justice advocacy, helping students shift toward a more engaged perspective of advocacy and social justice actions.

Studies that explored specific teaching tools within other courses were also present. Osborn and Costas (2013) mapped the use of role-play in a micro-skills course that appeared to impact the overall skill development among participants. In another study by Diambra et al. (2016), anonymously collected student questions about human sexuality and secrets or fantasies related to sexuality supported the effective selection of

topics linked to sections of a human sexuality course. The study included a discussion of the potential use of this tool aligned with social constructivism, to facilitate the learning process in courses that deal with highly sensitive topics. Williams et al. (2015) investigated the use of an eco-webbing tool linked to a human development course, finding that creating graphic illustrations of fictional clients appeared to help participants increase critical consciousness and social justice agency.

### *Integrating Self-Care*

Integrating self-care was the fourth theme within this category, with five ( $n = 5$ ) publications. This theme covered teaching or learning practices intended to enhance students' self-care, wellness, and/or personal growth linked to their curricular learning.

Across the studies, this theme highlighted how CE programs conceptualize and incorporate self-care education into their curriculum. Bradley (2013) identified three major themes among instructors representing their programs: the ambiguity of self-care definitions, the specificity of integration to individual courses, and the inclusion of faculty sharing their own experiences in self-care education. To provide clarity to the definition of self-care, Chen et al. (2019) developed a self-care counseling rubric, which proved to be an efficient and effective approach for assessing student self-care skills and tracking their self-care competence.

Fye and Baltrinic (2020) examined the importance of wellness practices for counselor; their findings demonstrated that students participating in a yearlong cohort-based project, guided by the Indivisible Self Model of Wellness (Myers & Sweeney, 2004), experienced various benefits such as stress relief, increased awareness, improved coping skills, and enhanced social connections within the cohort. In a similar study, Dye

et al. (2020) demonstrated that mindfulness training and techniques incorporated into a self-care program had a positive influence on students' self-efficacy, mood, stress, and overall well-being. Students who completed mindfulness-based learning activities in a counseling theory and practice course also reported that mindfulness activities enhanced their overall engagement and learning, as well as in their engagement in their work as counselors (Duffy et al., 2016).

A different approach to self-care education explored by Schmidt and Adkins (2012) involved students and instructors engaging in reflective practice grounded in Mann et al. (2009) and Schön (1983)'s set of skills for creating meaning. The study revealed that both participant groups considered reflective practice to be an essential process for their personal and professional lives.

### ***Technology within Teaching***

The last group within the teaching resources category, which included two ( $n = 2$ ) studies, looked at technology within teaching. Both studies in this section examined the use of technological tools and/or multimedia technologies as techniques to enrich student learning. An analysis by McCarthy and French (2017) of student responses to an open-ended survey regarding their experiences with video-recording reflections on specific counseling scenarios revealed the technique's effectiveness in facilitating the development of counseling skills. Additionally, students expressed their appreciation for the approach, as it provided them with a non-threatening method to practice their skills. In a study comparing the use of technological tools with students attending in-person and hybrid sections of a group counseling course with the same instructor, Renfro-Michel et al. (2010) found that the students of the hybrid section using video podcasts and second

life (a virtual reality world) had higher midterm, group proposal, and post-test grades than students in the fully face-to-face section.

### **Discussion**

This systematic review of 70 publications provides a comprehensive summary of the status of the current research in ETP-CE. The growing number of studies in CE instructional research is substantial for this relatively young profession. Further, the range of topics covered in these studies is inspiring, as it allows counselor educators to offer one another diverse ideas for improving effectiveness in course delivery. However, themes of this review also reveal areas for improvement.

Most of the publications in both categories of this literature review are qualitative ( $n = 49$ ) and focus on students' perspectives of teaching and learning ( $n = 58$ ). Topics cover the benefits of specific teaching methodologies and resources applied within content courses in the education of counselors. Only a few studies with themes like FCM, community-based teaching and learning, and integrating self-care more directly emphasize the usefulness of teaching methodologies or resources in various counseling courses. Although qualitative research on specific topics or courses is valuable, this trend leaves the CE field with less knowledge of the impact of such approaches with diverse groups or larger populations. It also limits opportunities to grasp universal aspects of effective teaching practices across the array of CE programs.

Even though some of the studies of this review demonstrate the benefits of integrating theories driven or conceptual framework to instructional research (e. g., Diambra et al., 2016; Dollarhide, 2013; Hall et al., 2018; Kiweewa et al., 2018), the majority of them do not incorporate well-established theories of teaching and learning,

such as experiential learning, self-directed learning, constructivism, or social-learning theories, lacking more direct connection to elements of foundational education. Similarly, the existing body of research does not precisely describe methodologies edifying teaching approaches, inclusive practices, and learning community activation.

The set of knowledge, skills, and attitudes or dispositions that instructors bring to a classroom and to their relationships with students closely ties to teaching effectiveness in higher education (e. g., Hagenauer & Volet, 2014; Hill et al. 2014; Shi, 2018; Swank & Housenecht, 2019). Further, the field of CE recognizes that effective teaching approaches involve a relational perspective and focuses on personal growth (Hall et al., 2018; Luterman, 2020). However, only a few studies in this literature review address the complexities of instructor factors consider the dynamics of instructor-student relationships within CE, and more directly link the effectiveness of the teaching practices to counselor instructional skills, dispositions, or work behavior development (e.g., Adams, 2019; Buller, 2016; Hunt-Avila et al., 2021; Ng et al., 2022). The studies examining students' reflections about the process (e.g., what they learned, their enjoyment) do not detail whether these teaching practices result in stronger, more effective counselors. Additionally, there are only a limited number of studies that consider the educational perspectives of the instructors themselves.

Despite the foundational importance of social justice and a multicultural lens in the education of counselors (Puig et al., 2022), and the call for best practices concerning cultural emphasis in CE research (Giordano et al., 2021; O'Hara et al., 2021), the studies within the themes from both categories do not provide detailed insights on cultural aspects related to teaching practices. For example, the theme of cultural lens in content

courses primarily focuses on the development of MSJCC within the context of multicultural counseling courses while few studies incorporate intersectional approaches, dispositions, and advocacy perspectives. Overall, the themes of this review do not emphasize the diversity of identities nor describe the impact of teaching methodologies or resources on counseling students from minority backgrounds.

### **Bringing it All Together**

In summary, the findings of this literature review demonstrate that there is a vibrant exchange of ideas for educating counselors, but this scholarly productivity is usually not designed for broad application (e.g., to answer the question of what works in the education of counselors across topics and specific contexts). Further, most of the research is not grounded in foundational knowledge of teaching and learning related to major theories and systems of education. Additionally, there is a prevalence of qualitative studies with a primary focus on students' self-report of learning experiences. CE research, for the most part, does not directly address the intricate aspects of instructor-student relationships and instructor factors, especially the connections between instructor identity, instructional preparation, and teaching emphasis. There is also limited exploration of how these factors apply to different contexts and relate to the diverse needs and learning preferences of students from various backgrounds. The findings of this review align with the concerns raised by other scholars (e.g., Minton et al., 2019; Border, 2019; Bradley, 2013; La Guardia, 2020) regarding the need to shift research focus from specific practices to strengthening universal elements that can serve as a foundation for ETC-CE.

## **Implications**

The growing body of CE research on teaching offers a new perspective on CE instruction. The main clarification of this review is that the rising number of standardized and research-based publications on CE instruction reveal a need for linkages to foundational education. Drawing on the findings of this review, we propose key recommendations to strengthen research in ETP-CE and inform future practices in CE instruction.

### **Grounding and Broadening Research**

In addition to addressing specific aspects in the preparation of professional counselors, more studies need to focus on teaching methodologies and align with well-known frameworks in teaching and learning. Exploring teaching practices as systems will allow the CE field to better identify which frames seem the best fit in particular CE contexts and which ones would be the best fit across courses. Broadening quantitative, instructor-centered, and more grounded studies benefit CE, including more opportunities for transferability. By better understanding the nuances of teaching practice and their alignment with learning theories, cultural perspectives in research (Giordano et al., 2021; O'Hara et al., 2021), foundations of the education field, and requirements in higher education (Mallot et al., 2014; Minton & Hightower, 2020), the CE field can strive for more effective educational experiences for counselors.

### **Balancing Teaching Resources and Methodologies**

While teaching resources have received significant attention in the literature, there is a need to strike a balance with teaching methodologies. A comprehensive approach that integrates both effective teaching strategies and theoretical frameworks can enhance

counselor education. Context-based teaching resources are helpful, but teaching methodologies applied across the curriculum can help identify what works in CE instruction.

### **Comprehending the Dimensions of Diversity in Instruction**

Though there are several studies about diverse students' lived experiences in CE programs (e.g., Dietrich & Bowers, 2018; Thacker et al., 2021), and despite the increasing focus of CE research on doctoral degree training and teaching preparation (e.g., Li & Liu, 2020; Perera-Diltz & Sauerheber, 2017; Waalkes et al., 2018), and the conclusions of studies on diverse CE faculty identities (e.g., Joshi et al., 2023; Telles-Oliveira, 2022), the extent to which teaching approaches vary based on context and demographics factors such as race, ethnicity, age, gender, or identity remains unclear. Tie culture, identity, and social justice exploration should be foundational for the education of counselors (Puig et al., 2022). Thus, conduct more longitudinal studies that involve a larger number of participants and implement purposeful samples to improve diversity and allow for a more comprehensive examination of linkages to culture. A research focus on diverse CE instructors would be particularly valuable in gaining insights and in advancing ETP-CE understanding.

### **Fostering Collaboration and Knowledge Exchange**

Encouraging collaboration among researchers, practitioners, and educators in the CE field can promote knowledge exchange and the sharing of best practices.

Collaborative efforts can support researchers to develop studies across educational disciplines and universities, allowing the inclusion of diverse social networks and access to larger and more varied samples. This emphasis would contribute to a collective effort

in centralizing the importance of the learning environment, teaching innovations, and instructional design that promote ETP-CE and curricular transformation.

### **Investigating Instructor Factors and Instructor-Student Relationships**

There is evidence supporting the link of instructor factors and self-efficacy (e. g., Sogunro, 2017; Vlieger et al., 2019). Counseling is a relational profession, and the learning of qualities matters for developing therapeutic relationships (Cochran & Cochran, 2021). Even though previous research has identified competence scope, self-efficacy (e g., Hill, 2014; Suddeath et al., 2020), and instructor dispositions as significant predictors of quality teaching and nurturing instructor-student relationships (e.g., Buller, 2016; Golubovic, et al., 2021; Hurt-Avila et al., 2020), the outcomes of this literature review point out the need for CE researchers to more directly examine the role of instructor factors in educating counselors. Advance studies of instructors' key knowledge, skills and identities linked to dispositions are essential to determine how these factors contribute to the nuances of instructor-student relationships and connect to core learning and development.

### **Addressing the Unknowns of ETP-CE**

Though there are many unknowns still to be investigated about ETP-CE that should ground future research plans, studies should explore a wider range of CE educational settings, including questions such as: (a) how can foundational education be best integrated into CE instruction and research? (b) what are the main elements of ETP-CE? (c) what instructor factors should CE instructors develop to benefit students' learning and development? (d) what is the impact of context on instruction and the education of counselors? and (e) how are instructor competence, context, and rigor interconnected?

Coordinating efforts to address these and other questions would strengthen the body of CE instructional literature, promote the advancement of competence literacy, and demystify the intricacies of educating future counselors.

### **Conclusion**

This 12-year review of ETP-CE allows for a comprehensive assessment of the progress made by researchers in various dimensions of CE instruction. The set of publications made it clear that future scholars should prioritize core instructional research to establish stronger connections between teaching methodologies, teaching resources, and foundational education. A logical next step involves shifting the focus from research on specific techniques to exploring grounding principles of teaching practices that can be effective across various course delivery methods. Additionally, having more studies rooted in learning theories can contribute to the design of more effective instruction, and more research on instructor factors and instructor-student relationships can play a pivotal role in enhancing CE instruction. The work of counselors is complex, and educating counselors is a challenging task that requires comprehensive training. The rapid growth of research in CE instruction in recent years presents an opportune moment to reconsider the best directions for research that can inform ETP-CE. By bridging the gap between the role of instructor factors and the core education of counselors, CE instructors can effectively translate evidence-based practices into classroom settings, better preparing counselors for their multifaceted roles.

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## **CHAPTER II**

# **INSIGHTS OF INTERNATIONAL FACULTY INTO THE ROLE OF INSTRUCTOR FACTORS IN EDUCATING COUNSELORS: A QUALITATIVE STUDY**

## **Abstract**

This study focuses on the perspectives and experiences of 10 international faculty members who have experience in and currently teach master's level courses in CACREP-accredited programs in the United States. Based on a constructivist perspective, the study aimed to better understand how counselor education international faculty members perceive the role of instructor factors in educating counselors. Through a thematic analysis of data collected by individual interviews, six major themes related to instructor factors emerged: structuring the learning community, teaching-learning implementation, infusing cultural lens and social justice, conceptual and performance solidification, self-learning and community membership, and personal and professional accounts. The findings of this study provide insights into how participants perceive instructor main factors, contribute to the understanding of instructor factors as a construct for teaching practice, and have implications for CE research and emerging counselor educators' preparation.

*Keywords:* counselor education, counseling, effective teaching practices, instructor factors, international faculty members

## **Insights of International Faculty into the Role of Instructor Factors in Educating Counselors: A Qualitative Study**

Counselor educators continually strive to strengthen the effectiveness of counselor education (CE). The preparation of new counselors is a critical area of focus for CE researchers (Mallot et al., 2014), evidenced by the growing number of studies dedicated to instructional practices and signature pedagogies (Baltrinic and Morris, 2020; Barrio Minton, 2020; Barrio Minton & Hightower, 2020; La Guardia, 2020). The Association for Counselor Educators and Supervisors (ACES), a leader in this area, first organized the Teaching Initiative Taskforce (2016) and is currently advancing CE instruction best practices through ACES Teaching Practice Briefs (2021).

CE trends in instructional research includes an increased emphasis on self-efficacy and competence-based education (Akos et al., 2019; Swank & Houseknecht, 2019; Suddeath et al., 2021; Suddeath et al., 2020). Specifically, Swank and Houseknecht (2019) mapped main competencies across four domains – knowledge, skills, dispositions, and behaviors – that highlighted the significance of instructor factors (IF) and can be foundational for CE.

IF encompasses the scope of instructor's teaching qualities (e.g., instructor characteristics, backgrounds, identities), skills (e.g., teaching style, instructor immediacy behaviors), and knowledge (e.g., content expertise) (Hill, 2014; Housel, 2021; Songuro, 2017). The importance of IF is well documented in higher education (Vlieger et al., 2018) from a iterative perspective in teaching improvement and self-efficacy into the learning community (Ayala et al., 2021; Hubertz & Van Campenhout, 2022; Larson & Lockee, 2020), with scholars acknowledging the critical role of IF for instructors' self-

efficaciousness, instructor-student relationships, as well as for student engagement and academic performance (Delfino, 2019; Sogunro, 2017).

There is increasing interest in IF-related studies focusing on self-efficacy, professional development, and teaching preparation of CE doctoral students (e.g., Li & Liu, 2020; Perera-Diltz & Sauerheber, 2017; Suddeath et al., 2020, 2021; Waalkes et al., 2018). Despite the efforts of previous CE researchers in demonstrating the importance of IF for CE instruction (e.g., Buller, 2016; Golubovic et al., 2021), only a few studies directly explored IF and its role in effective teaching practices with CE (ETP-CE).

Studies examining IF centered around students' preferences of instructors' attributes and their perceptions of instructor effectiveness (e.g., Hurt-Avila et al., 2021; Kreider, 2009; Moate et al., 2017a; Moate et al., 2017b; Pietrzak et al., 2008; Vela et al., 2019). The studies addressing the views and experiences of CE instructors (e.g., Adam, 2019; Buller, 2016; Golubovic et al., 2021; Johnson & Robins, 2021; West et al., 2020) primarily contributed to the understanding of main dispositions in instruction and teaching modalities. For example, Hurt-Avila et al. (2020), in a Q-sort study regarding students' preferences for instructors' style found students had varying preferences, including 40% of students preferring factors related to experiential learning and meaningful assignments, 33% preferring factors tied knowledge-based teaching and organization, 31% preferring factors linked instructors' dispositions and approach to students, and 21% preferring factors of teaching practical applications. Buller (2016) found main elements of effective teaching reported by instructors: pride in teaching, care, challenging students, authenticity, passion for teaching, organization, and creativity while

Adams (2019), found instructors' identities influencing their instructional decisions with trauma courses.

The authors of these studies highlighted the intricate interactions between instructor factors (IF), student and instructor characteristics, and teaching approaches. Thus, there is a need for further exploration to enlighten the relevance of IF, identify to what extent instructors' demographics and culture inform IF, and clarify how IF intersects with diverse CE contexts.

### **The Value of the Experiences and Perspectives of IFM-CE**

Coming from diverse regions of the world and having originally developed at least part of their backgrounds within cultures outside of the United States (U.S.), international faculty members in CE (IFM-CE) differ from each other in their identities, experiences, and perspectives (Attia, 2021; Interiano-Shiverdecker et al., 2022; Joshi et al., 2023), including their viewpoints of the U.S. cultures and the education of counselors. The presence of these professionals in CE is increasing each year (Interiano-Shiverdecker et al., 2022). The Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Program-CACREP (2018) reported an increase from 0.59% to 0.66% of full-time IFM-CE in CACREP-accredited programs between 2013 and 2017. However, the contributions of IFM-CE in the CE field have not been fully recognized (Interiano-Shiverdecker et al., 2022; Joshi et al., 2023). There are only a few studies addressing this group directly, especially regarding their cultural uniqueness under the idea of “international identity” and professional experiences in cross-cultural contexts (e.g., Attia, 2021; Interiano-Shiverdecker et al., 2022; Joshi et al., 2023; Ng et al., 2022).

Though previous CE studies have primarily focused on international counseling students (e.g., Joshi et al., 2021; Kuo & Woo, 2021; Lértora & Croffie, 2019; Li & Liu, 2020; Pendse & Inman, 2016; Teles-Oliveira, 2022), the experience of IFM-CE, such as perceived barriers, acculturative journey, and resilience development, is likely similar to those students (Attia, 2021; Interiano-Shiverdecker et al., 2022; Joshi et al., 2023). Further, like other CE who identify as minorities (Chang et al., 2018; Interino & Lim, 2018; Thacker et al., 2020), IFM-CE experiences of identity negotiation evolve from challenges they face as they navigate CE cultural contexts and establish professional spaces. However, IFM-CE demonstrate resilience and make significant contributions to academia (Attia, 2021; Interiano-Shiverdecker et al., 2022; Joshi et al., 2023).

Additionally, Interiano-Shiverdecker et al. (2022) found that IFM-CE's personal strengths link to context-based cultural understanding and intercultural competence. These findings parallel studies conducted on international faculty in higher education that linked bicultural experiences to professional growth and a global outlook in education (Chen & Lawless, 2018; Kim et al. 2012; Kim et al., 2014; Mamiseishvili, 2013; Mamiseishvili & Lee, 2018).

Literature with attention to bicultural identity integration (Chen et al., 2022; LaFromboise et al., 2023; Safa, & Umaña-Taylor, 2021; Mendoza, 2022) posit that bicultural competence – the ability to understand the nuances and negotiate between the mainstream culture and an individual's culture of origin – is a cultural adaptation that promotes sociocultural resilience, enhances connection, and culminates in the capacity of competently navigating cross-cultural contexts and relationships. These psychosocial outcomes have been proven to reflect in competent management of cultural transitions,

work-related adaptability, and influence the success of bicultural faculty (Mwangi et al., 2021; Mendoza, 2022; Murphrey et al., 2023).

Based on this discussion and considering the need to better understand and recognize the contributions of IFM-CE in the CE field, the purpose of this study was to explore the culturally enhanced perspectives and experiences of IFM-CE on how IF contribute to the effectiveness of education and the development of well-equipped counselors. To support our aim, we formulated two research questions: (a) What are the perceptions of IFM-CE regarding IF? and (b) How do IFM-CE perceive the role of IF in the education of counselors? The implications of this study contribute to the understanding of IF as a construct for CE teaching practice and provide insights for ETP-CE research.

### **Research Methods**

In this general qualitative inquiry (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016), we explored how IFM-CE attributed meaning to their IF perspectives and experiences using an inductive-deductive approach. Qualitative studies involve inquirers using themselves as the primary instrument for data collection, employing methods such as interviews, focus groups, and direct observations. The goal is to understand participants' perceptions and develop a theory of understanding (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

The first author encompassed a critical role collecting and conveying the depth and richness of data through individual interview application (Creswell & Poth, 2018) while being mindful about the potential impact of her presence on participants' sharing and reinterpretation of their experiences. We acknowledged the presence of interpretive biases inherent in qualitative inquiry, influenced by factors such as context, contents,

researcher background, and the dynamics of interactions with participants (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Guided by a constructivist-interpretivist epistemology (Wilkinson et al., 2019), we strove to uphold the integrity of participants' sharing and recognized their understandings as subjective and culturally shaped constructs. The constructivist paradigm enabled a comprehensive understanding of participants' diverse perspectives, facilitating insights into their experiences.

### **Definitions and Theoretical Framework**

The definition of IF varies and encompasses various elements related to instructor teaching qualities (i.e., attitudes; dispositions; self-efficacy) and teaching competencies (i.e., being the content expert) (Akos et al., 2018; Hill, 2014; Housel, 2021; Suddeath et al 2020; 2021). IF commonly refers to specific teaching skills, such as instructor-student relationships and instructional strategies (Buller, 2016), as well as instructor dispositions, which include the traits instructors bring into their teaching and interactions with students (Hurt-Avila et al., 2021). In this study, we defined IF as aspects related to the instructor's personhood (e.g., identities), interactions (e.g., instructor-student relationships), and expertise (e.g., knowledge) that contributed to effective teaching and student development. IFM-CE refers to the participants who self-identified as foreign-born CE professionals, regardless of their pathways to working in the U.S. (Joshi, 2022; Interiano-Shiverdecker et al., 2022).

We adopted the CE teaching competence framework proposed by Swank and Houseknecht (2019) to explore the nuances of IF, comprised of four essential domains of competencies: knowledge (e.g., learning theories, student needs, accreditation standards), skills (e.g., student engagement, instructional strategies, course preparation), professional

behaviors (e.g., ethical standards, student treatment), and dispositions (e.g., humility, curiosity, passion for teaching, collaborative interpersonal style). The multidimensional constructs of competence served as analytical tools for this inquiry situated within the constructivist paradigm (Wilkinson et al., 2019).

### **Researchers' Perspectives**

The three study authors played different roles on our research team. The first author, who served as the primary researcher and interacted with participants, identifies as intercultural, Brazilian, cisgender female, heterosexual, and has a background as a clinical mental health counselor, a CE doctoral candidate, and a graduate teaching associate during the research. The second author, serving as the research advisor, identifies as white, American, cisgender male, heterosexual, and has 25 years of expertise in CE and higher education. The third author, responsible for data triangulation as the second coder and auditor, identifies as a bicultural, American, cisgender female, heterosexual, licensed professional school counselor, and was a CE doctoral student at the time of this work. Our age range spanned from 27 to 59 years old with a mean of 46.3 at the time of this study development. We recognized the importance of transparency in sharing our identities, reflexive self-descriptions, and roles within the research process to ensure credibility (Holmes, 2020).

To maintain methodological integrity (Bourke, 2014), we were mindful of the importance of learning from participants' experiences and perspectives while avoiding unwarranted assumptions, particularly concerning culture and identity. However, to uphold the study's trustworthiness, we acknowledged that our own identities, assumptions, subjectivities, and biases inevitably influenced the study (Holmes, 2020),

thus we consistently engaged in reflective practices on our reflexivity and research-related experiences. The first author's cultural background and abilities as an English speaker as a second language also impacted the study, so we considered cross-linguistic and cross-cultural nuances during the interactions with the research team and study participants (a comprehensive statement of reflexivity by the first author is available for further details). Nevertheless, the first author's diverse identities also offered opportunities for authenticity, context-orientation, and diverse interpretations in data collection and analysis. Therefore, we remained mindful of how the identities and perspectives of all three authors, including their unique backgrounds and experiences, influenced research decisions throughout the study.

### **Participants**

A total of 10 IFM-CE from diverse nationalities and working in varied CACREP-accredited master's programs across the U.S. participated in this research. We collected participants' demographic characteristics linked to educational information in a pre-interview phase, including ethnocultural elements and academic information, using a set of 12 questions (See Appendix D) incorporating best practices recommendations for gathering personal information that consider racial/ethnic equity and inclusivity (Connelly et al., 2016). We summarized these main characteristics while considering strategies for data de-identification (Vokinger et al., 2020) to prevent inadvertent identification of participants. See Table 3 for more for detailed demographic information.

**Table 3***Participants' Demographic Information*

Participant	Self-Identification	Age report	Region of Origin	Native Language	Time Living in US	Teaching Time	Teaching Position Rank
10	8 cisgender females	25-34 (4)	North America (1) South America (1),	Chinese, Cantonese,	16.52 years	7.5 years	Clinical (1)
	1 cisgender female lesbian	35-44 (3)	Southeastern Asia (1) Southeastern Europe (1)	Korean, Marathi,			Lecturer (2)
	1 cisgender male	45-54 (1)	South Asia, (1) East Asia (1)	Portuguese, Turkish,			Non-Tenure Track (2)
		55-64 (2)	Eastern Asia (4)	Spanish			Tenure Track (5)

*Note.* We described age, length of time living in the U.S., and time teaching by range or mean.

In addition, we ensured confidentiality and participant protection by consistently utilizing data de-identification using numbers and anonymization strategies throughout the report (Vokinger et al., 2020). The use of numbers to identify participants prevented language bias regarding name origin. Participants taught in various modalities, including in-person ( $n = 5$ ), hybrid ( $n = 2$ ), and multiple (in-person, hybrid, and online) ( $n = 3$ ) formats. The academic institutions represented in the interviews encompassed very high research activity universities ( $n = 3$ ), moderate research activity universities ( $n = 3$ ), and other teaching-based universities not falling into these categories ( $n = 2$ ); two participants did not inform us of the university type ( $n = 2$ ).

### **Research Procedures**

We implemented the procedures of this study from April to June 2023, following best practices recommendations for the integration of data analysis and collection (Giordano et al., 2021; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

### ***Recruitment***

After obtaining Institutional Review Board approval, we employed purposeful and criterion convenience/network-based sampling selection (Baker & Edwards, 2012) to recruit IFM-CE working in diverse CACREP-accredited master's programs across the U.S. Our outreach efforts involved recruiting using direct and indirect methods, including sending direct emails and distributing fliers (See Appendix B) to professional networks, potential participants, and counselor educators who could facilitate access to potential participants. Additionally, we published a recruitment announcement via electronic mailing on the ACES International Students and Faculty Interest Network (ISFIN) listserv. The email invitation included a flier with detailed information about the study,

an eligibility screening question, and a link to access the study consent form (See Appendix A) and demographic questionnaire. After that, we sent a pre-interview email (See Appendix C) to participants including access to a Doodle poll link (<https://doodle.com/en/>) including options for an interview day and time.

As part of the study decision criteria, we adopted sample design by size, origin, and diversity (Giordano et al., 2021; O'Hara et al., 2021) to strengthen experience-centered processes and capture diverse perspectives and experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018). In the CE field, qualitative studies often utilize samples ranging from five to 20 participants (Baker & Edwards, 2012) with the determination of the sample size typically guided by data saturation, where new information ceases to emerge (Hennick & Kaiser, 2019). Based on these considerations, we established a sample size ranging from six to 12 representative participants, adhering to predefined criteria for qualitative research sampling that considered both quality and data saturation (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Hennick & Kaiser, 2019). We achieved data saturation through eight interviews, though we conducted two additional interviews to ensure saturation and increase sample diversity.

### ***Participants Selection***

A total of 12 individuals answered the initial forms, but only 10 met the criteria and participated in the study. Eligible participants for this study met the following criteria: (a) self-identified as an adult foreign-born individual from any nationality, aged 18 years or older; (b) were English speakers as a second language; (c) were current IFM-CE with a full-time teaching appointment in any modality (online, hybrid, or in-person) at the master's degree level in a CACREP-accredited CE program, regardless of the

geographic region of the U.S., or retired IFM-CE for less than three years; (d) pursued a doctoral degree in CE in the U.S.; and (e) had at least two full semesters of teaching experience at any rank and position. Though we defined inclusion criteria considering the information from the U.S. Census Bureau (2019) and the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services [USCIS] (2020) regarding the international population, we primarily based the definitions on previous literature documenting IFM-CE as a neglected cultural/demographic group in CE research (Interiano-Shiverdecker et al., 2022; Joshi et al., 2023; Kim et al., 2014).

### ***Data Collection***

Data collection within this study included two approaches that the first author applied. First, the first author conducted a video-recorded individual interview lasting 45 to 60 minutes ( $M = 55$ ) via the Zoom platform as the primary means of data collection (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Second, she developed direct observation annotations (side notes), utilizing analytical/descriptive fieldnotes (during the interviews) and journaling through vlog/recordings and/or written notes (after the interviews) (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

The semi-structured interview guide consisted of six central open-ended items (questions) and included a pool of possible follow up or probe items (See Appendix E). We chose this interview method because it provided the first author with more opportunities to access data during the interview. It allowed for the use of pre-established follow-up or probe questions and the flexibility to insert new related items if needed. We developed the interview items following a four-phase protocol refinement (Castillo-Montoya, 2016) that involved aligning the guide with the research questions, adopting an

inquiry-based approach, conducting a review before implementation, and piloting the guide.

We employed an inductive-deductive approach (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016) within the guide to align it with the nature of the study inquiry and designed the items to be flexible and culturally sensitive (Giordano et al., 2021). In applying this approach, we aimed to elicit participants' reflections and capture their experiences with and perspectives on IF, using an introductory item, two items exploring participants' understandings of IF, two items focusing on their experiences implementing IF in teaching practices, and a closing question for additional insights (See Appendix E). During the interview process, the first author often utilized sets of follow-up items to probe for elaborations, ensuring a neutral and tentative approach.

### ***Trustworthiness, Rigor, and Ethics***

We adopted procedures to address the six main elements of rigor with this study (Wilkinson et al., 2019; Korstjens & Moser, 2018; Lincoln & Guba, 1986): trust and integrity, credibility, transferability, dependability, confirmability, and reflexivity (Lincoln & Guba, 1986). We incorporated these elements into the study's conceptualization, data collection, and analysis linked to the management of the researchers' reflexivity to promote methodological integrity and to make the findings trustworthy. We emphasized dependability and confirmability, maintained transparency throughout the research process, and adhered to ethical best practices for confidentiality, data collection, and analysis. To enhance transferability, we provided clear descriptions of all stages of the study (Korstjens & Moser, 2018), such as documenting the study's timeline, conducting trial audits, and recording critical incidents pertaining to data

collection and analysis. We implemented steps of involvement to enhance credibility, including phases such as the initial invitation email, pre-interview correspondence, participant questions, and demographic information. Ethical considerations for this study encompassed clarity regarding research confidentiality, risks, and procedures, as well as respectful and culturally sensitive relational experiences during interactions.

The first author took steps to examine her own conceptual lens and acknowledged the objective and subjective factors that could influence the research process. The strategies included engaging in discussions with the other researchers, making use of observation and reflective information gathered through analytic and descriptive notations during and after the interviews, and utilizing recorded and written journaling, and memos to aid in data collection and analysis, track subjectivities, and serve for auxiliary or confirmatory resources in the data analysis (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The third author (second coder) collaborated with the first author to triangulate the data, providing more accuracy, reducing bias, enhancing overall reflexivity, and strengthening the reliability of the coding process (Saldaña, 2016). As part of reflexivity, the first author conducted a pre-interview with a volunteer to substantiate questions for future use with actual participants and ensure appropriateness of the questions before engaging with real participants. Further, the second author and research advisor assisted the process of data collection and analysis by auditing, reviewing, and discussing the utility of the study approaches.

### ***Data Analysis***

We adhered to best practices for counseling qualitative data analysis, including management, reporting, and principles of transparency in research (Giordano et al., 2021;

Hunt, 2011). Considering this, the first author manually reviewed the Zoom-based electronic transcripts and cross-referenced them with the interview videos to ensure accurate transcription and to minimize biases related to interpretation and cross-linguistic issues. To analyze data, we employed two-cycles of thematic analysis (Saldaña, 2016) of the transcripts. The first author developed the first cycle coding solo to identify units of analysis related to participants' perceptions of IF, and the first and third authors developed the second cycle coding to serve as a validation process to check the identified units. This approach facilitated synthesis and enhanced our understanding of the data (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The first author developed the first cycle's coding using the initial/open-ended coding method (Saldaña, 2016), which allows a free coding process based on emerging similarities and differences when categories are not developed a priori. This involved breaking the data into discrete excerpts and organizing it into four main categories and six thematic clusters, which facilitated the transition to the second cycle of coding (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Saldaña, 2016).

Following the first round of coding, we offered participants the opportunity to engage in member-checking, by providing interview transcripts and a synthesis of initial themes (giving them three days for verification). We facilitated this process through the UTK Vault system (<https://vault.utk.edu/>), which ensured secure communication (See Appendix F). This strategy enabled participants to clarify meanings, gain new insights, suggest corrections, and pose questions to the first author (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). In total, six participants approved their transcripts and initial findings, two provided some corrections and/or confirmations, and two did not respond to the attempts to contact them, resulting in automatic consent for the use of their data.

After member checking, we conducted the second round of coding with a theoretical method, focusing on the categories and themes that emerged during the initial coding to enhance accuracy (Saldaña, 2016). The third author engaged in this phase of data analysis as a second coder for data triangulation. The first author de-identified the interviews transcripts for the triangulation process that consisted of three stages: (1) independent coding to look for convergence or divergence; (2) comparison of independent coding findings, to identify areas of agreement/disagreement; and (3) debrief about pattern identification to identify new thematic opportunities or coding patterns.

The first and third authors implemented this process of triangulation over a period of four weeks. This involved conducting independent reviews of three interview transcripts per week for the first three weeks, followed by the analysis of four transcripts in the final week. The first and third authors held weekly Zoom meetings to discuss the overall process. This iterative approach (Saldaña, 2016) contributed to refining the coding performance and conceptualization. Based on the outcomes of data triangulation, we merged two initial themes, created a new theme, eliminated one category, and developed two new category descriptions. As part of the second cycle of coding, the first author analyzed all descriptive and analytical fieldnotes to construct the final thematic descriptions and compose the report. In the last stage of data analysis, the third author verified and approved the organization of the new thematic data.

## **Findings**

We placed the findings of this study into three main categories and six major themes, including specific attributes or subthemes for definition. See Table 4 for themes scope definition.

**Table 4***Study Major Themes Placed within Categories*

Category	Themes	Summary of Attributes
Community Enabling	Structuring the Learning Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Work of Creating Community</li> <li>• The Components of a Learning Community</li> </ul>
Education Process Activation	Infusing Cultural Lens and Social Justice (through multiple interactions)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Background as Opportunity</li> <li>• Broaching to Supporting Students's Evolving Identities</li> <li>• Broadening Mindset</li> </ul>
	Teaching and Learning Implementation (how to)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contextualizing the Learning Experience in the Real World</li> <li>• Designing Instruction</li> <li>• Educators</li> </ul>
	Conceptual and Performance Solidification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conceptual Advancing in Classroom</li> <li>• Performance Advancing Outside of Classroom</li> </ul>
The Self of CE as Positionality	Self-Learning and Community Membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Importance of CE Community</li> <li>• Continually Developing Self as a CE Instructor</li> </ul>
	Personal and Professional Account	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gatekeeping</li> <li>• Navigating Cross-Cultural Contexts and Negotiating Identities</li> <li>• Personal and Professional Experiences and Positionalities</li> </ul>

*Note.* We ordered themes by categories, attributes definitions, and salience, but especially manner.

We defined and ordered themes based on salience and clarity, with a focus on scope. IF exhibited variations across the data, encompassing common IF shared by all IFM-CE as a cultural group, IF that were unique to each individual IFM-CE based on their identities, cultural background, experiences, and professional expertise, and IF that were common to CE instructors' community linked to the four domains of instruction competence identified by Swank and Houseknecht (2019).

As a main finding, we identified six core IF commonly associated with IFM-CE teaching practices, including: communication, group facilitation, negotiation, pedagogical-andragogical skills and knowledge, decision-making, and intercultural skills and knowledge. The IFM-CE reported a diverse combination of IF activation that varied in frequency and manner and related to their unique approaches as instructors, beliefs of what emphasize in the education of counselors, and type or modality of courses they were teaching.

The categories of this study generated thematic interconnection and arrangement by similarities. The themes of this study derived from IFM-CE comments and reflected their perspectives and experiences regarding IF. See Table 5 for sample quotes of major themes.

**Table 5**

*Sample Quotes Illustrating Major Themes*

Themes	Example Quote
Structuring the Learning Community	“The relationship between students and instructors is the heart of the process; we need to create a bond to be able to influence the teaching and learning experience and make sure students will be comfortable in reaching out ... Relationships are not a choice and will define the direction of the process.”
Infusing Cultural and Social Justice Lens	“Political views are a diversity status, and you need to be okay with having another individual that has a completely different political approach in front of you ... that's a bias that you need to encounter. So, if we could talk much more about intersectionality it would be better within a diversity and social justice lens ... we need these lenses as our students.”
Teaching and Learning Implementation	“Students are in different stages of learning, and we need to find balance in addressing it in ... For some students, what they need is to walk through their personal issues and feel confident and I can assist with this; then, for other students who are in a more advanced developmental stage, I would provide more direct feedback to support their next step of development and learning, a beginner student they need a lot of emotional support from the instructor to be able to feel comfortable and also be willing to be vulnerable ... It is our role to activate the use of self to address these developmental aspects of learning.”
Conceptual and Performance Solidification	“Individual feedback is a powerful resource that can truly help in learning solidification, but it needs to be culturally sensitive and customized to have that effect. Also, we need to incorporate strategies to contextualize learning as it supports learning retention ... then find balance on it. It is about going through a reversal approach, plus going through a unique, individualized emphasis, and finding this balance to keep your standard and legitimately support students.”
Self-Learning and Community Membership	“For effective teaching practice, you need to continue to reflect about what you are doing. You need to be a lifelong learner to know what's going on in the field, what's going on with students ... You need to have a community... So, being part of a community is about learning and growth, but also about finding a place to feel comfortable to be yourself, be part of.”
Personal and Professional Account	“The narrative today is a narrative of battle, and for many times it comes to us into the CE context ... Learn how to navigate these contexts, have clarity about what is negotiable and not negotiable while keeping my authenticity and commitment to the mission of educate future counselors ... this is the goal for me right now ... cultural friction is a reality here.”

*Note.* We used illustrative quotes to support the understanding of the scope-definition through the study’s six themes.

### **Category One: Community Enabling**

This category highlighted instructors' use of dispositions, skills, and work behaviors to establish the learning community and facilitate interconnected interactions. It emphasized three main interactions: instructor-student relationships, student-student relationships, and student self-exploration. Key elements included instructor presence as a role model, effective communication, mutual understanding, personalized attention, and fostering student voice.

#### ***Structuring the Learning Community***

This theme, the most prominent in the study, emphasized participants' use of IF to establish a supportive community prior to implementing the teaching-learning process. IFM-CE assumed formal and informal roles as facilitators, focusing on creating a sense of community and utilizing relational and group facilitation skills. This intentional approach fostered authenticity, encouraged relationship exploration, and facilitated experimentation to enhance collective learning, as observed by participant 012: “It just needs to start with self ... you need to understand where you are coming from; then you need to understand where students are coming from as well.” All participants acknowledged the significance of community-building, which entailed knowing students, fostering connection, respect, and appreciation. Participant 014 emphasized that an initial emphasis in creating community sets the foundation for the overall learning experience and shapes the nature of interactions students will encounter. Participant 016 said, “you need to foster the relationship between you and your students and try to foster the relationship among the students as well as having them to build a community of themselves.”

*The Work of Creating Community.* The process of creating a learning community entailed conceptualizing the learning context as a structured system that activated individual and collective engagements. For example, participant 22 said:

I spent a fair amount of time getting to know the people there, before we started talking about stuff ... If I do that at first, then I am creating an environment that is open and conducive to learning, because I am really starting with the self, I start with the persons in my space, and I am responsible to create the climate that is going to be informing how we do class, our time together; it comes first. I think that's an important part of teaching.

This process led to the formation of a collective identity and included the co-construction of community ideals, principles, and operating guidelines (how the community of learning will interact). As shared by participant 014 this means establishing a sense of safety and implementing values, rules, norms, and dispositions that guide interpersonal interactions. Participant 022 emphasized the relevance of the group by pointing out, “I’m not just talking to individuals. I’m talking to the collective ... The class as a group can create its own culture, so I want to pay attention to that.” Instructors emphasized the activation and management of the learning community through modeling essential dispositions and work behaviors. These included demonstrating respect, humility, setting boundaries, and promoting collaboration. For example, participant 012 shared, “We need first of all to create the context of learning; we cannot drop this essential step ... We also need to utilize the rich experiences, backgrounds, and expertise of each student, and what they bring into the learning space.”

*The Components of a Learning Community.* Structuring the learning community involved facilitating three main components or interactions: the instructor-student relationships, student-student relationships, and the students' relationship with themselves. Participant 012 illustrated the meaning of relationships in education: "Getting to know each other, sharing the power in almost all processes related to their learning and development, that will help feel that it is real, this type of good and meaningful relationship with the students happens when we achieve that mutual understanding."

Participants emphasized the instructors' clear communication and presence as a role model within the instructor-student relationships, their investment in personalized attention (e.g., direct feedback, individual meetings) and their efforts to create a comfortable environment for students to reach out. Participants 015 and 022 shared views regarding instructor skills, reinforcing that instructors need pedagogical and facilitation skills to be able to manage the class and intermediate students' background, conflicts, and issues as assets for learning." Participants 016, 015, 021, 013, and 017 emphasized the importance of valuing student feedback. They actively incorporated it into their decision-making processes and viewed it as an opportunity for self-learning and fostering humility within the learning community.

Student-student relationships depended on instructors' emphasis on creating opportunities for meaningful interactions and peer-to-peer learning, and most participants agreed that this is best achieved when students learn from each other's cultures, experiences, and expertise. Participants 013, 017, and 022 emphasized that students learn better from each other, so to create this opportunity on a regular basis is a practice for them. Participants also reinforced the need for instructor authentic engagement with

students as part of the community, as participant 018 stated, “I am only one more member of the community that brings my authentic self and expertise.” Student-student relationships involved instructors' emphasis on creating opportunities for meaningful interactions and peer-to-peer learning. Participants 013, 017, and 022 highlighted the importance of students learning from each other's cultures, experiences, and expertise. They emphasized the regular practice of creating such opportunities. Participants also stressed the need for instructors to authentically engage with students as members of the community. As participant 018 expressed, "I am only one more member of the community that brings my authentic self as my students ... I learn so much from their expertise."

Participants 012, 013, 016, and 018 highlighted the importance of implementing activities and strategies that encourage peer exploration and promote the development of peers as role models, as shared by participant 012, “Our students are learners but also experts in the classroom context. This is what I want to happen.” Student relationships with themselves encompassed instructors creating opportunities for students to engage in self-reflection regarding their own learning process, allowing for the expression of their identities and facilitating individual and collective reflections. This fostered bidirectional learning and created a space for students to share their experiences and insights, as mentioned by participant 022, “The identity of each student in the collectivity, the group itself will be intersecting the learning process all the time.” Participants 013 and 017 added that this included opportunities for students to utilize, activate, and verbalize their unique backgrounds. Participants discussed students’ opportunities for self-development; participant 012 said, “We need to teach students how to learn, how to reflect, how to be

aware of who they are, and who their clients are, but especially who the process is meeting.”

Participants 022 and 021 emphasized instructors adopting a new mindset regarding the curriculum and allowing room for students to derive meaning from the content of the class, stressing that conceptualization requires self-reflection and personalization. Specifically, participant 017 explained, “Students need to engage in self-reflection ... Because when they're in front of a client, they need to engage in self-reflection of what they're thinking, what their biases are, what/how they conceptualize that client, where to go next and how/when not to help, when to stay silent.” Participants emphasized the significance of co-evaluating the ongoing process, adjusting, and implementing changes in strategies as part of their community activation. This involved assessing group dynamics and climate, offering opportunities for anonymous and direct feedback to instructors, and other practices that fostered student engagement, empowerment, and collective-individualized growth.

### **Category Two: Education Process Activation**

This category focused on IFM-CE utilizing their own expertise and self to enhance the teaching and learning process, incorporating core IF. It encompassed three themes: cultural and social justice emphasis, activation of intercultural knowledge, and various approaches adopted by participants for teaching implementation and solidification.

#### ***Infusing Cultural Lens and Social Justice***

The second theme highlighted the significant role of IFM-CE in integrating their own backgrounds and experiences to infuse cultural and social justice perspectives into

their teaching and interactions with students. Participants emphasized the necessity of incorporating these lenses across all counseling courses to equip counselors with the competence to support clients' evolving identities and cultural needs. They also emphasized the importance of integrating pluralistic elements and intersectional emphasis, such as intercultural skills, to contribute to the decolonization of counseling, suggesting the creation of an MSJC enhancement section in all courses, the inclusion of experiential activities or assignments that promote cultural reflection and pluralism, and the adoption of materials that offer diverse perspectives. Many participants were aware of and emphasized that the cultural differences they have as IFM-CE can be an initial problem but later become essential factors in enhancing connection.

For example, participant 015 shared, “We should focus on intersectionality ... I need to bring my own cultural identities and professional discipline ... Bring my openness and curiosity ... They want to help me to understand the culture, and I think that helps us to make connections.” Participants agreed that this includes modeling humility, vulnerability, and self-disclosure on a regular basis as culture should be “at the center,” not something “eventual.”

Participants unanimously recognized the significance of self-awareness as IFM-CE, enabling them to adopt assertive teaching approaches. They emphasized the importance of sharing their cultural identities, professional principles, and expertise to inspire students to contribute their own backgrounds, cultures, knowledge, and skills, thereby enhancing the collective learning process. For example, participant 015 shared, “My teaching is effective because I'm aware of the language barrier. So, in my teaching I use lots of additional resources to compensate for it, such as pictures.” This participant

explained that she is also intentional in using interactions with webinars and students group discussions and multimedia resources to help prevent communication biases and cross-linguistic issues while also enhancing peer-instruction and community. Some participants emphasized the need for exploring a “culture of contact,” bringing to the classroom discussions related to cultural and socio-political critical issues that impact the profession and practice, as explained by participant 021:

So, bringing that in class is relevant. We won't have a solution, but we need to understand what's going on; we need to practice this in our brain, to be able to deal with what's coming and teach students how to practice this understanding of culture to develop the capacity to see the big picture.

Additionally, many participants emphasized the need for a change in mindset regarding a multicultural and social justice approach, as stated by participant 017:

We must openly talk about cultural tensions/frictions in the U.S. with our students ... It is crucial for our students to develop the skills to navigate cultural differences and divergences with genuine respect and appreciation ... Emphasizing diversity appreciation can serve as a means to promote cultural reconciliation.

*Background as Opportunity.* Participants emphasized the importance of use of self from a strength-based approach to activate their own cultural background and professional experiences as part of their IF activation. They were unanimous in seeing this process as inextricably linked to their identities but how they do this is related to their self-awareness and self-confidence, as participant 015, said, “Bringing self in the conversations means it will be uniquely tied ... My culture is different from other

faculties, so I believe it can cause some discomfort ... Bringing myself into the conversation is about connection and modeling comfortable with discomfort.” This approach involved exploring the impact of their own identities on the teaching and learning process. For example, participants 016 and 019 shared that even though it can be hard to influence students collectively, sharing background can impact many students individually.

*Broaching to Support Students Evolving Identities.* IFM-CE recognized the significance of deepening their understanding of students' identities, including their cultures and perspectives on cultural values. They shared that they actively and openly integrated experiential elements in the classroom to foster a deeper exploration of and address cultural factors or issues. Specifically, participant 022 voiced the need of “reading the environment” and broaching what is going on:

We have the course CV, you have a plan, you have a map, and you know the steps, and you think, this is what I'm going to do. Then if you try to push through that without responding to what is happening in the classroom, it's just going to be unresolved and it's not going to look good. Then, you end up somehow having to scramble to change what you're doing, because this thing has a life of its own, and it wants to come out, and I can't just put my hand on it and push it down.

Many participants reported that as they learned how to navigate cross-cultural contexts on their own as part of their acculturation process and self-learning to adapt in a new cultural environment, it became easier for them to facilitate cultural broaching and foster critical thinking with students, as participants 017, 019, 021, 022 emphasized. Participants were unanimous in seeing “modeling vulnerability and self-disclosure”

relevant to enhance broaching with students; participants 012 and 017 mentioned that students need to understand how to broach various topics with clients, particularly culture and identities, to effectively utilize this information throughout the counseling process.

Many participants emphasized that facilitating cultural competence requires an emotional regulation for instructors that is not always easy to achieve, such as participant 015 saying, “Sometimes it is not easy as students have their own time to learn these things; also, we have our own identities and students can truly offend us on some level, I already have moments in which I felt very small in class.” This human aspect of IFM-CE was also emphasized by participant 012, “We are humans as well and even though we understand very clearly our roles as educators and that students' cultural learning is a long-term process, when they get micro-aggressive it will impact you and affect your relationship with them.” Other participants emphasized the sense of mission to compensate for the effects of microaggressions, as participant 013 shared:

I emphasize with my students that they know I'm as human as they are. As in counseling, we always have strong personalization and that does not mean we are not invested in our clients that we do not like so much ... we are and care ... the same about students ... I see the perils of my job as an educator ... I can be frustrated with my students, I can be angry with my students, but I'm still invested in their growth and in their journey.

Participants mostly expressed that intentionally utilizing their IF to broach cultural experiences helped advance students' cultural mindset. However, some participants acknowledged the negative impact of social context on students. Participants 015, 016, and 018 highlighted the challenge of achieving collective change in students'

cultural mindset due to the long-standing influence of social roles and cultural friction. They suggested focusing on "planting seeds" for individual change rather than seeking systemic advancement, given the complexity of the U.S. context and its impact on instructional work. Participant 016 added that some students do not want to change and sustain an ethnocentric perspective, thinking they do not need to learn from other cultures: "I feel like it's not something real when we teach culture because of this; it is not about microsystems, it is much bigger, it is about the macrosystem."

*Broadening Mindset.* To broaden students' cultural mindset, participants recognized the importance of incorporating intercultural perspectives with a focus on multicultural and social justice topics. Participants 013, 014, and 017 emphasized the need to explore specific cultural groups and promote counseling practices that facilitate cultural mindset growth. They mentioned multiple resources and strategies, including the use of didactic materials and ongoing discussions on national and international elements in counseling theory and practice. Participants 012, 013, and 014 highlighted instructors centering diversified content and materials as essential resources rather than as additional resources and suggested the adoption of innovative assignments that facilitate effective exploration of new perspectives.

Participant 013 highlighted the relevance of the origin of materials: "I have a personal connection with the authors because as an educator that also comes from transparency, the people that my students are reading about matters ... So, I often ask my students - 'How many of you research the author who wrote this article?'" Several participants emphasized the significant role of instructors in promoting the interconnectedness of cultures, worlds, and mental health practice, leading to a more

inclusive perspective; participants 016, 018, and 012 stressed that when instructors actively address these topics, students naturally integrate them into their counseling practices.

### ***Teaching and Learning Implementation***

This theme, placed third in terms of salience, centered on the instructors' ability to design the teaching-learning process, to select suitable methodologies and resources, and to provide support for specific content exploration in a contextualized way. Mostly, implementation were based on decision-making and pedagogical-andragogical skills. It included participants' emphasis on the use of self in teaching linked to scaffolding and foundational knowledge to support their teaching abilities. Several participants noted that “everything comes together,” in teaching implementation. Specifically, participant 017 emphasized the need to intersect ethical skills with all courses:

Students need to understand how to develop meaning through what they just learned. I try to do that by offering opportunities for reflection, because when you understand where you are coming from, and how you assign meaning, it's easier for you to not engage in unethical practice. Sometimes we get into ethical situations because we just didn't see the issue ... More and more we have seen misconduct in the counseling profession, and I think that is because we are not having ethical explorations enough, and ethics goes away beyond just reading the code of ethics.

*Contextualizing the Learning Experience in the Real World.* Participants mentioned the importance of instructors going beyond the classroom; this involved intentional efforts such as facilitating problem-solving to create connections to real-world contexts, as

participant 021 noted, “We need to teach students to develop the capacity to see the big picture ... I always ask myself, ‘How can I use this piece of information?’” Participants shared about their use of facilitation skills, community-based strategies, and the inclusion of interdisciplinary elements to activate the learning process both within and beyond the curriculum. For example, participants 013 and 021 stressed the need for intentionality in contextualizing counseling inside and outside of the U.S. and fostering critical thinking among students through a pluralistic perspective. Participant 013 emphasized, “Further discussion on the origin of teaching materials is also about contextualizing the teaching and learning experience that helps in avoiding colonized practices.”

Participant 021 reflected, "Everything revolves around contact and interaction. As instructors, it is our responsibility to continuously bridge the gap between the outside world and the classroom context, fostering contextualized learning and practice.”

Participants 021, 019, and 017 shared the need to explore pluralistic approaches and inclusive practices, creating opportunities to examine relevant topics and critical issues with students not only locally but beyond the border while also engaging students in individualized and collective explorations. For example, participant 017 shared, “There is a narrative of inclusion, but that narrative in practice it's very, very different,” reinforcing the need to explore inclusion with different dimensions of education.

*Designing Instruction.* Participants shared their specific instructional practices, highlighting the importance of setting clear goals for students, using diverse teaching methods and materials, and employing various strategies to explore key contents and contextualize the learning experience. See Table 6 for teaching practices reported by participants.

**Table 6**

## Main Elements of the IFM-CE Report of Teaching Practices.

Competence	IFM-CE Report
<p>Knowledge and Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Theories, models, and best practices</li> <li>• Educational skill set as background</li> <li>• Engaging and interacting with students</li> <li>• Instruction approach</li> </ul>	<p>Utilize instructional strategy and design skills</p> <p>Include group facilitation skills</p> <p>Present well-planned and meaningful lessons</p> <p>Honor students' uniqueness and needs (inclusive emphasis)</p> <p>Think and act collaboratively</p> <p>Enabling learners to evaluate their own progress</p> <p>Help students get comfortable and own their mistakes (cultural shift)</p> <p>Approach cross-linguistic aspect of interactions with students</p> <p>Adopt live problem-solving during class time</p> <p>Use image as non-verbal resource</p> <p>Make room for collective reflection and conflict resolution</p> <p>Teach reflection/creating space and activities for concept incorporation and implementation</p> <p>Incorporate a strength-based approach</p> <p>Hear learners and instigate them sharing their needs</p> <p>Use self-disclosure as skills/tool</p> <p>Offer opportunities for relational-personalized feedback</p> <p>Offer opportunity for contextualized and community-based learning</p> <p>Interview students to learn about them (enhance relationship and create community)</p> <p>Co-monitoring projects and long-term assignments development</p> <p>Use of open-book quizzes for critical thinking practice</p> <p>Use of AND not BUT regarding conceptual education</p> <p>Utilization of visual language (images and multimedia resource) to expand communication and diversify learning opportunities</p> <p>Use of panel and peer-instructor strategies to enhance learning solidification and collective conceptualizations</p> <p>Help students trust the process</p> <p>Help students learn how to differentiate their personal development/issues and their development as future counselors</p> <p>Use decision-making for the curricula as much as possible</p> <p>Focus on major cognitive development</p> <p>Make learning a concrete process</p> <p>Co-construct customized solutions with students</p> <p>Review and implement an expanded perspective on gatekeeping</p>

**Table 6 continued**

Competence	IFM-CE Report
Professional Behaviors and Dispositions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ethical, legal, and professional behavior related to self and in the interactions with students</li> <li>• Traits of instructors</li> <li>• Beliefs and values</li> </ul>	Adhere to ethical approach Have clarity in boundaries Be a role model (e.g., model self-care, ethical behavior, etc.) Advocate for students and profession Explore diverse teaching methods Attention to the dynamic of class Expressing confidence on the learners' capacities Communicate to learners that they are each uniquely important Model courage to be vulnerable Deal with white silence Clear communication Help students own their mistakes Meet students where they are Create a safe space for students Understanding where students come from (curiosity) Build trust based in evidence Operate from UPR and empathy perspectives Enhance main dispositions through teaching (e.g., authenticity) Link gatekeeping and professional dispositions

*Note.* We allocated IF IFM-CE across Swank and Houseknecht (2019)'s adapted domains of teaching competence and primarily linked to an andragogical perspective.

Many participants emphasized the significant role of proper instructional design, with participant 015 stating, "The dynamic between the instructor and teaching depends on the instructor's background." Primarily, participants explained that the educational strategies they adopt aim to help students with these main learning goals: to personally connect with counseling concepts, to professionally experience implementation, to support their understanding and application of skills, and to enhance their professional identity development. Participant 021 shared, "Creating opportunities to implement conceptual learning would help students develop expertise on subject matters and effectively apply these aspects in their counseling practice." More specifically, participants 012, 017 and 019 emphasized the importance of establishing a minimum scope and consistently exploring this key content across courses to solidify it with students. Participants shared that applying feedback should be done in a culturally sensitive manner. For example, participant 014 shared:

Giving individual feedback is important, so individualize it. For example, I would support students from India by being more specific and also providing more structure. I think the international students that are from India are very comfortable receiving instruction. They might not feel very comfortable without structure and instruction, the same for some other international students, for example, from China. However, for the domestic students, I tend to provide more flexibility.

When asked about how they address international students, most participants acknowledged that the main difference lies in their better understanding of certain aspects specific to these students' experiences in CE programs and the U.S., such as visa

regulations, work permissions, and job security concerns. Participants such as 012, 014, 015, 016, and 018 discussed the importance of helping students recognize the benefits of making mistakes, noting that students' reluctance to acknowledge their mistakes may be influenced by American culture. Participant 015 asserted, “In counseling we use ourselves as a tool, so we need to learn about our own mistakes and model it to clients as well.”

*Educators.* FM-CE participants emphasized the importance of adopting a student-centered perspective and addressing critical issues that impact counseling practice. Most of them recognized that the field is colonized and highlighted the need to strike a balance between meeting curriculum requirements and equipping students to collaborate effectively with clients from diverse backgrounds. Participant 022 highlighted, “We need pedagogical skills to articulate the process ... the foundation piece,” and participant 021 added, “I spend time grading papers, deepening on the writing, on the format, on the thinking, and all is my responsibility ... I think we should not deny our students the right for their education.”

Many participants shared the need to customize teaching and assess the effectiveness of practices that achieve inclusive, developmental, and cognitive learning, as participant 018 affirmed: “It is important to meet students where they are ... We need to ask ourselves: What kind of support or action students need as a group and/or this specific student needs?”

Participants were unanimous in sharing that their educational actions were primarily rooted in philosophy of teaching that enhanced students' perspectives and emphasized community-learning, experiential teaching, and professional orientation, but

they clarified that they developed this emphasis only after beginning their careers; it was challenging to find their identities as IFM-CE at the beginning because of a gap in the preparation of CE. Specifically, participants 017, 019 and 021 shared they wish to learn more about instruction before starting to teach. Participant 021 said, “I don't see myself, only as an instructor, but I'm thinking as an educator. This is my role. An educator is different from an instructor.”

The summary of critical issues participants addressed included administrative demands conflicting with teaching, disconnection from the higher education context and interdisciplinary approach, heavy curriculum load without sufficient opportunities for integration, the need to infuse a cultural lens across all courses and review MSJC materials and practices, the omission of important topics in the curriculum, CE instructors lack of preparation, and the issue of legislative regulations impacting the field.

### ***Conceptual and Performance Solidification***

This theme focused on solidifying student learning by creating opportunities for retention and practical application of concepts. Participants stressed the importance of learning solidification by having students apply concepts, self-evaluating their development of critical skills, implementing learning in outside class activities, and as stated by participants 013, 019, 021, and 022, repeatedly interacting with critical issues and counseling specific concepts to promote specific learning chunks. Participants 012, 014, 016, 018, 019 expressed the need to properly balance personal development and technical or cognitive learning – as stated by participant 019, “Of course you don't have to do therapy with any student, but it's important to hear where they come from and what is impacting their professional development, academic success, and well-being.”

Participants 013 and 017 explained that students face struggles (e.g., financial, crisis) that truly impact their learning and that instructors need to be sensitive to address these issues.

*Conceptual Advancing in Classroom.* Participants suggested various approaches to support to increase learning retention and competency development, including mindfulness activities, case-based learning, peers-review activities, panels for hot topic discussions, and co-monitoring long-term projects or assignments with students.

Participants 015 and 017 prompted the relevance of checking on students with their ongoing or long-term CACREP or other related assignments to support their retention, critical thinking, and learning while also supporting their emotional regulation.

Participant 016 shared always starting classes with 5 to 10 minutes of mindfulness activities to facilitate relaxation and well-being and implementing team panels to explore the main contents of the course through opportunities for collective conceptualization and peer-instructor experiences. Participants 015, 016, and 017 disclosed their extensive use of experiential learning linked to external elements to support retention and the incorporation of images and multimedia to support visual learning. Participant 015 said: “Pictures speak more. I use lots of visuals and metaphors within flipped classroom models that are heavily grounded in discussion.”

Many participants emphasized other aspects of the learning experience as opportunity for students' conceptual retention, such as participant 017, “Having skills and using technology well is part of an inclusive practice that innovates in terms of opportunity for learning retention and is seen by students as a factor for connection and appreciation.” According to participants 014, 016, 017 and 018, solidifying learning also

includes evaluating practices with a focus on their impact on students' future professional development and professional identity.

*Performance Advancing Outside of Classroom.* Several participants shared the strategies they adopted to extend the learning experience to other contexts outside of the classroom, such as service experiences and other interactions with community members that enhance social justice. For example, participant 017 discussed splitting two courses into conceptual learning in class and then service learning in the community in which this participant serves as a consultant for students' experiences and project development, saying "my idea is to help students take a look at this from a social perspective, and not only from an individual approach."

Some participants emphasized the need to review their understanding of community-based engagements, as when participant 014 emphasized that an alternative for solidifying learning through community is "bringing community into the classroom," inviting guest speakers that are inclusive and also talk to students from minoritized identities, stating, "For example, we have a good number of international students, so bring a guest speaker in career course that share how both domestic and international counselors can find a job helps."

### **Category Three: The Self of CE Instructor as Positionality**

This category focused on instructors' personal and professional perspectives, development and growth as individuals and educators.

#### ***Self-Learning and Community Membership***

This theme emphasized instructors' dedication to personal and professional growth, including involvement in professional organizations, membership in

communities, and continuous learning. It encompassed their commitment to ongoing self-improvement, career development, and the integration of personal and professional experiences. For example, participant 014 shared, “I intentionally remind myself to be humble, and also to be willing to continue to educate myself, this is my role.”

*The Importance of the CE Community and Continually Developing Self as a CE*

*Instructor.* IFM-CE highlighted the value of being part of a nurturing and helping community. All participants emphasized the significance of finding a sense of belonging within the counseling profession, honoring one's own voice as a CE instructor, to foster meaning and satisfaction. Many participants highlighted that being part of such a community brings motivation during challenging times and reinforces a sense of mission. Participant 013 added, “Having your own tribe as an educator to decompress ... this became a lot more important for me.” Specifically, participants 012 and 015 reinforced the importance of being part of a community that boosts identification and having members with similar interests.

Participants 013, 014, 017 shared their fulfillment in exploring diverse perspectives in counseling through continued learning and translating it to educating future counselors. Other participants emphasized the need for ongoing learning as an integral part of instruction, IF, and identity as a CE. For example, participants 013 and 016 explored the sense of competence tied to the enjoyment related to self-learning and engagements as IFM-CE. Specifically, participant 013 said:

I see myself ... As a continued learner ... Knowledge and learning is going to be a constant process of your life, because time and context changes pretty quickly,

and to be good at what you do you have to be able to match the context that comes.

*Gatekeeping.* Participants discussed their perspectives on instructors' roles as gatekeepers, with some looking at the importance of maintaining boundaries while also reevaluating the concept of gatekeeping. Many of them questioned whether it truly protects the field or hinders honest and open discussions with students. Participants 013 and 019 specifically criticized excessive gatekeeping and suggested that CE instructors should strike a balance between preserving the field and fostering students' sense of innovation and learning advancement.

On the other hand, participants 014 and 016 made a point about the need to revise gatekeeping, particularly in relation to the role of instructors; in their perspective, this revision would assist CE instructors in maintaining boundaries within the contexts of CE programs. As participant 014 pointed out:

Gatekeeping can be challenging for IFM-CE ... Coming from diverse backgrounds and being an international faculty... we all have different cultural backgrounds and thinking modes. I think about diversity, equity, and inclusion issues... So, we need to consider all those factors when we make a gatekeeping decision. I do think that this is a big challenge we need to explore in work with internationals.

Participants' thoughts on this topic presented a cultural perspective of how higher education instructors should view gatekeeping and explored ways to shift mindset and practice regarding gatekeeping.

### ***Personal and Professional Account***

This theme explored the perspectives of IFM-CE regarding their internationality intersecting personal and professional identities, their commitment to the field, and their bicultural backgrounds. It encompassed their views on self, students, teaching, counseling, education, and the field of CE.

*Navigating Cross-Cultural Contexts and Negotiating Identities.* Within this subtheme, participants explored individualistic or collectivist aspects of their identities and ways to articulate both in teaching and how they articulate their IF as internationals, and. All participants shared about how they perceive their presences within CE environments and reported the confluence of their identities in terms of advantages and disadvantages. They linked their internationality to a more accurate critical thinking, especially regarding culture and social justice. Participant 013 shared, “my internationality is my biggest IF,” while participant 019 revealed that being an IFM-CE brings a differentiated relational perspective, saying “The biggest advantage of being an IFM-CE is in the work we develop with minority students: we know what it's like to be invisible.” Participants 013, 014, 015, 016 and 019 noted that the positives and negatives of being an IFM-CE depend on IF articulation (how to) with the contexts. Participant 012 added, “there are always two sides.” All participants shared a sense of mission in articulating their internationality as IF through CE contexts, especially regarding the cultural contributions they can offer, as participant 021 said, “I will naturally be a contributing member of the community of the groups that I am associating myself with, but this involves finding your self-awareness and awareness of others.” See Table 5 for the summary of advantages and disadvantages reported by participants.

**Table 7***Summary of the Main Advantages and Disadvantages of being an IFM-CE*

Advantages	Disadvantages
Authenticity	Cross-cultural and cross-linguistics issues
Awareness of self, identity advantages, and disadvantages	Deal with white silence
Biculturalism	Disconnection and social isolation
Big picture perspective	Economic/budgetary issues
Comfortable with discomfort	Gatekeeping
Cross-cultural communication and checking	Functionality transitioning to a different platform
Emphasis on both collectivity and individuality	Invisibility/Internationality as a problem
Identity self confidence	Job insecurity and visa statuses issues
Internationality as IF	Lack of sense of self/identity self-confidence
Know in practice what invisibility is	Microaggressions
Knowledge beyond frontiers/intercultural mindset/competence	Pressure for conformity
Openness/creative-critical thinking	Professional-related disparities
Self-acceptance	Resistance and discrimination (students, other faculty, IFM-CE)
Relational-cultural perspective	Self-isolation based on prior negative experiences
Role model	Unfamiliarity with American culture, history, policies, and laws
Willingness to connect/get involved	Unfavorable context/Disregard

*Note.* We sorted the main aspects of being an IFM-CE, from participants' reports with the

Personal and Professional Account theme.

Some participants emphasized the need to honor the culture of origin as they became bicultural and highlighted that balancing acculturation and enculturation increases the sense of self and clarifies what is negotiable and not negotiable in terms of identities, making it easier to navigate different roles into CE contexts. For example, participant 017 shared, “Education is a relationship that you built with students. So, it is in many ways a privilege for me to come from a culture that values relationships ... I care, which means that sometimes I go an extra mile.” This participant emphasized being a bicultural person works as a “strong IF.” Similarly, participant 014 shared how cultural differences can support connections, saying:

I did discuss with my students my rewarding experience as an IFM-CE who doesn't speak English as a first language ... When a student and I work through this process ... Through the challenges and difficulties ...that's how the relationship gets stronger.

Most participants shared that they have had to negotiate their identities within the contexts of CE, especially regarding communication and language proficiency, individual and collective invisibility, and social presence as IFM-CE. Regarding sharing space with other faculty members, participants experienced different levels of integration, such as participants 017 and 018’s reports of positive experiences, but most reported direct and/or oblique frictions that influenced authentic expression of themselves and required intentional management of those interactions, as participants 015 and 016 mentioned. Participants such as 014 and 016 shared seeing attitudes such as departmental members that suggested “separation,” “distance,” and/or the implicit idea of IFM-CE being “less prepared as CE,” an idea that seems to extend to another American minority faculty.

Participant 018 reflected, “I don't think there is a particular sense ... there are many American CEs that are pretty open ... I try to be neutral now, but it's hard for me sometimes.” Participants reported that as they learned to better negotiate their personal and professional identities and increased their sense of self and pride, it became easier to interact cross-culturally, as shared by participant 012, “We as internationals experience a lot of impostors’ syndromes as we all the time compare ourselves to others ... I think that when you appreciate who you are more, then you can have a better relationship with the contexts and students.” Participant 021 stated, “The environment will also give you challenges, because not everybody appreciates what you can bring in” while participant 013 expressed a different understanding of how to articulate self as an IF in cross-cultural experiences within IFM-CE,

I think it's really important to norm the space for compassion, grace, and growth. When we are working within the context of a predominantly white space in the U.S. it is important to be aware that to learn something new requires time. It also requires compassion and grace, and it takes time to rebuild the ruptured/broken relationship or restorative practice, to be able to build the allyship, to build the space more equitable.

*Personal and Professional Experiences and Positionalities.* Participants shared that their accumulated experiences in the U.S. link to their cultural backgrounds and positionalities mostly from a strength-based approach and emphasized how it links to their biculturalism and activation of IF. For example, participant 021 shared, “We have no choice but to become bicultural ... and eventually, hopefully, we will achieve a stage where we own our bicultural background; we become the owner of this process.”

Some, such as participant 017, shared experiences of change while becoming bicultural, saying it is feasible to manage and take advantage of these “both sides.” Some participants considered their relationship and sense of self relevant to navigate CE contexts, as participant 022 shared, “For me what is most important is authenticity. I'm going to show up completely as who I am, and I am going to be transparent and open, and I am never going to ask my students to do something I'm not willing to do myself.” Participants 019, 021 and 022 emphasized the need for awareness that an IFM-CE represents diversity and that self-confidence and intentionality navigating unfavorable CE contexts is essential. Participant 014 shared, “It does not matter if you are an American instructor or an IFM-CE. Being who you are would be very important.”

Participant 14 also said experience interacting with U.S. culture and students helped in being more comfortable about self, such as becoming less concerned regarding "an accent " and "being prouder " of cultural inheritance. Participant 014 emphasized, “I think that my linguistically diverse identity might impact my teaching. However, I did find that after I build the credit, I have the rapport with my students ... Actually, English is not that prevalent anymore.” Additionally, many participants discussed the big spectrum of being an IFM-CE and how this experience expanded their perceptions, as summarized by participant 021:

I think as an IFM-CE, as a faculty member who is bilingual, who comes from a different culture, who has traveled to many other parts of the world, I'm going to bring those perspectives and manage it into the classroom, and I am going to be able to. So, I think what these experiences have done for me, personally and professionally, is that it helps me to have different perspectives and hold them,

hold those different perspectives in my awareness and my understanding of things. Just because we are different doesn't mean that one of us is better than the other; there is no supremacy in it. I don't think that any group of people in the world should claim supremacy over another.

While not all participants explicitly mentioned negative experiences in the field, all of them referred to their “journeys” to become an IFM-CE. Participants 014, 015, 016, 019 shared prior or current hardships within the CE context that shaped their paths to becoming IFM-CE and defined the manner of their interactions within CE contexts, faculty and students, including: discomfort with the educational system; language-based discrimination; micro and macro aggressions in the classroom, within the context of CE programs, and by other faculty members; and difficult experiences while CE students. Other participants discussed the impact of their impostor syndrome, their previous experiences as international CE students and the experiences earning their tenure promotion. For example, participant 019 stated that, “English is not my first language. I have a heavy accent; I still have anxieties about academic writing in English (even holding a tenure position) ... So, I have a close experience of impostor syndrome.”

Participant 016 shared having a hard experience with an advisor while in a graduate program that disqualified this participant's master's degree certification in the original country based on “opinion” instead of assessment so wanted this participant to retake some courses because of this. Participants 012, 014, 015 and 016 discussed their transition as CE international students to IFM-CE, experiences of cross-linguistic and general discrimination, and lack of CE program support system. Participants emphasized that their current perspectives as IFM-CE are strongly rooted in their experiences –

positives or negatives – including the way they perceive their roles as educators, approach their teaching practices, interact with students, and interpret issues and events in the context of CE. Participants 016, 017, 019 commented that the experience of getting immersed in a new culture changed their mindset in different aspects and accurately reflected their cultural-relational perspective.

Participants explored how the differences and commonalities of IFM-CE related to their positionalities and professional capacity and that the invisibility of their individual identities with CE required a review including the CACREP standards' descriptions, while there is a sense of connection with the international group and community. Participant 021 illustrated, "We have various experiences, we come from different backgrounds, and all that. But yeah, the common experience, perhaps, is the transition into a different platform." Participants reported that their extensive exposure to diverse cultural backgrounds and cross-cultural-contexts brought them the recognition that establishing connections is essential.

### **Discussion and Implications**

This study provides a comprehensive overview of IF dimensions and enhances our understanding of its significance and utility. By including a diversified sample of IFM-CE in this study, we could co-construct a variety of views that meld into common experiences of IF. Our findings confirm the complexity of defining competence and what makes an instructor effective (Akos et al., 2019; Swank & Houseknecht, 2019; Walkees et al., 2018). The central contribution of this study advances the disciplinary understanding of the nuances surrounding IF for IFM-CE, aligning with prior study outcomes regarding characteristics of educators and the complexities of IF variations

based on multiple factors, dispositions, and activation of self (e.g., Adams, 2019; Buller, 2016; Hurt-Avila et al., 2021; John and Robins, 2021; Ng et al., 2022; West et al., 2020). Specifically, this study supports the understanding of IF as a construct in CE teaching, clarifying how IF activation contributes to the effectiveness of education and the development of well-equipped counselors. Moreover, it informs the relevance of IF as a resource supporting ETP-CE.

Our findings address the two research questions as they reveal common themes of a diverse group of IFM-CE regarding their perceptions of IF and the connections they establish to teaching practices and students' learning and development. Our analysis of data suggests that IF articulation has dimensions, personal aspects are relevant in the expression of IF, and that IF are multifaceted, reflect instructors' identities, flow together through all teaching related actions, and require intentionality to be articulated into the learning community.

The identified IF practices and perspectives in IFM-CE across the six themes closely correspond to the domains of competencies outlined by Swank and Houseknecht (2019) – knowledge, skills, professional behaviors, and dispositions. Within this framework, the focus on IF mostly revolves around teaching skills, such as fostering instructor-student relationships and utilizing effective instructional delivery strategies, as well as dispositions through the cultivation of specific IF that IFM-CE employ in their teaching and student interactions (See Table 6). Our findings suggest that as a cultural group that brings diversity within the unique identities of each individual, IFM-CE differs in the challenges they face compared to U.S. born faculty members and in the strengths they bring to the field. Further, the participants of this study demonstrated their

capabilities to activate and sustain IF to design effective approaches across diverse domains of competence. These reports parallel research on self-efficacy suggesting that efficacious instructors possess the ability to organize and execute diverse spheres of actions necessary for achieving specific goals (Waalkes et al., 2018; Suddeath et al., 2020; 2021) that related to an iterative emphasis on specific teaching and learning experiences (Hubertz & Van Campenhout, 2022; Larson & Lockee, 2020).

### **Instructor Factors Mode: Deliberate and Intensive, Wide-Ranging, and Continuously Applied**

Our findings suggest that the IFM-CE participants in this study are deliberate and intensive in selecting teaching strategies, methods, and approaches to support instruction, through an iterative approach that enhances community and specific learnings (Ayala et al., 2021; Hubertz & Van Campenhout, 2022; Larson & Lockee, 2020). Their strengths with IF activation especially focus on building and maintaining learning communities, attending to instructor-student relationships, and enhancing culture. We identified two distinct features that the participants employ to activate IF: application of a range of approaches and continuous attention (e.g., learning community is not just established, but established and maintained, re-established, and continuously evaluated) to IF.

These findings align with the strengths identified by Interiano-Shiverdecker et al. (2022) as key attributes of IFM-CE, such as intercultural competency, flexibility, adaptability, resilience, sense of meaning, grit, and perseverance. Our findings also resonate with studies on international faculty success and bicultural competence in other disciplines (e.g., Kim et al., 2012; Kim et al., 2014; Mamiseishvili, 2013; Murphrey et al., 2022; Mwangi et al., 2021), underscoring that these professionals' capabilities connect to

global expertise and a blending of experiences that benefit student development. Furthermore, the significance of the combination (the types of factors IFM-CE use), frequency (how often IFM-CE employ IF), and manner (how IFM-CE integrate IF into teaching practices) of core IF activation within the context of CE, demonstrate the distinctive approaches each IFM-CE employs to these dimensions.

Additionally, the exploration of IF through the six major themes of this study demonstrate the influence of a relational-cultural perspective that IFM-CE apply in their teaching practices, especially in the more salient themes: structuring the learning community, infusing a cultural and social justice lens, and implementing teaching and learning. Consistent with prior research on IFM-CE and international faculty from diverse fields (e.g., Attia, 2021; Chen & Lawless, 2016; Interiano-Shiverdecker et al., 2022; Joshi et al. 2023; Mamiseishvili & Lee, 2018; Mendoza, 2022; Murphrey et al., 2022), our findings demonstrate that IFM-CE experiences navigating multiple cross-cultural contexts shape their comfort levels in utilizing IF within a culturally sensitive framework. Mostly grounded in their bicultural competence and intercultural skills (LaFromboise et al., 2023; Lei, 2023; Portera, 2014), and through intentional actions aimed at promoting mutuality, empathy, and authenticity, IFM-CE acquire the ability to navigate the intricate dynamics of interpersonal interactions and establish connections.

Our findings align with studies regarding competency development through exposure and interaction (experience through time) and an iterative emphasis on instructional design and teaching emphasis (Larson & Lockee, 2020) that lead to intentionality within instruction and practice effectiveness (Suddeath 2020; 2021; Waalkes et al., 2018).

### **Instructor Factors Variation: Confluent, Multifaceted, and Fluid Process**

This study's findings convey the idea that the variability of IFM-CE personal experiences, cultural backgrounds, and identities may impact the way they see and activate their IF. Ng et al. (2022) suggested that the use of self in instructional practices relates to intentional activation of IF while LaFromboise et al. (2023) clarified those variations on bicultural competence in diverse settings ties to intrinsic motivation and a sense of belonging with the context. This study suggests that the use of IF varies in manner according to both internal or personal elements and external influencers within the CE contexts, such as training received during doctoral studies, courses taught, and interactions with students and departmental colleagues; the dynamic of both personal and external influencers define the level of connection and belonging. This suggests that IF activation is situational, multifaceted, and fluid; thus, IF emerges as a set of confluent forces that guide teaching-related actions of IFM-CE across contexts. This matches Tacker et al. 's (2020) findings on CE doctoral-in-training experiences, where individuals negotiate their marginalized identities during professional identity development, and Li and Liu's (2021) outcomes on international CE in training acculturation experience linked to identity development as they start teaching.

Consistently with the findings of Interiano-Shiverdecker et al. (2022) on strengths of IFM-CE and Swank and Houseneckt (2019) regarding instructors' competencies, our findings did not present a new set of IF (See Table 6), but highlighted a broad consensus on various modes of core IF articulation. In addition to dispositions, participants often activate a core of six IF that they consider essential to intentionally articulate in different

manners, frequencies, and combinations across courses within CE programs with the goal of promoting a more significant learning experience.

### **Reflecting Instructors' Identities and Self-Efficacy**

Our findings suggest that IF reflects instructors' identities at different levels, which aligns with prior studies on CE instructional practices (e.g., Golubovic et al., 2021; Hurt-Avila et al., 2021; West et al., 2021) and confirm that instructor identity is relevant for self-efficacy. The emphasis of professional identity development during a CE career includes increased ethical performance and authenticity through multiple roles and relationships (Dickens et al., 2016; Interino & Lim, 2018). Based on this, the complexity of IF, its variation and mode of articulation seem to evolve from IFM-CE's professional identity and their professionally and culturally related experiences, such as their preparation as CE and their culture of origin. Specifically, our findings link to studies on self-efficacy development based on experience (Waakes et al, 2018; Suddeath et al., 2020) and bicultural identity integration (e.g., Chen et al., 2022; Mendoza, 2022) as a predictor of flexibility, adaptation, relationship-orientation, critical thinking, and big picture perspective that supports competent navigation across diverse cultural contexts and relationships.

Further, previous studies on CE international students parallel the experiences of many IFM-CE in translating past and current hardships into resilience and competence as they shift from a deficit perspective to a strength-based approach while making sense of their CE-related journeys (e.g., Lértora & Croffie, 2019; Kuo & Woo, 2021; Teles-Oliveira, 2022). How IFM-CE find balance in the acculturation and enculturation experiences is relevant to their IF activation because learning how to navigate paradoxes

of adaptation can unfold in an expanded perspective permeated by cultural awareness and humility. Our findings also resonate with Li and Liu's (2020) study on teaching preparation with international counseling doctoral students, where these researchers found international identity and acculturation become prominent upon entering the teaching practice, suggesting these acculturative experiences shape IFM-CE identities. The continuous and authentic articulation of strengths and weaknesses by IFM-CE reflects a competence-based approach that personalizes student experiences (Akos et al., 2019) and leads to various learning outcomes, including helping students navigate and learn from mistakes, fostering ethical education, and promoting cultural humility as iterative practice. Sogunro (2017) reinforced that by embracing their authentic selves in teaching, instructors form strong connections with students and facilitate effective learning experiences. This aligns with the positive impact on creating an authentic learning community when IFM-CE intentionally shares their personal and professional identities.

IFM-CE's implementation of quality work with students and in CE programs relates to a sense of mission, commitment, and advocacy grounded on a deep understanding of "how to" relational-cultural approach articulation; however, long-term experiences of adversity and continued need for identity negotiation can compromise mental health and well-being (Chan et al., 2018; Interino & Lim, 2018; Thacker et al., 2020), and impact performance. These context-related challenges become critical in higher education when authentic integration is unattainable (Chen & Lawless, 2018; Interiano & Lim, 2018), limiting the sense of belonging in the work environment as reported by many IFM-CE, potentially leading to inferior engagement and stress

proliferation, as found by Chen and Lawless (2016) in their study with female immigrant faculty. The experiences of our study participants also connect to international career research that suggests cross-cultural experiences push career adaptability and facilitates cross-cultural adaptation (Chen et al., 2020), but academic-work context variations, work volition, subjective social status can affect quality of life (Autin et al, 2017; Li et al., 2023). These experiences underscore the importance of recognizing and addressing the effects of these hardships on CE-IFM and considering appropriate support and resources to promote well-being with CE programs.

### **Commitment to Culture and Social Justice**

Educating counselors to develop a broader cultural mindset serves as a strong motivator (LaFromboise et al., 2023) for the IFM-CE participants of this study, driving commitment to promoting inclusivity. As in Puig et al. (2022), IFM-CE see cultural emphasis as one of the foundations of counseling that is not always prioritized in CE programs. Cultural and social justice understanding intersects this study participants' communication within the personal and professional account theme, suggesting participants commitment to and capacity to iteratively enhance this perspective in their work. Cultural differences permeate IFM-CE and students' intercultural encounters, and the IF become a resource to help students increase openness related to cultural curiosity and intercultural skills (Portera, 2014; Lei et al., 2023; Li & Liu, 2020). IFM-CE not only prioritize cultural competence and social justice in their instructional practices by broaching students' background and sharing their bicultural identity and professional performance, but also advocate for integrating these topics into all aspects of teaching and courses as well.

Specifically, participants' emphasis on a cultural and social justice lens relate to their goal of creating a new culture within CE that places cultural awareness at the core. This approach requires the use of appropriate resources and materials for teaching, underscoring the importance of a cultural-relational perspective that IFM-CE within this study seem to be familiar with. Specifically, participants of this study stress that engaging future counselors with a cultural and social justice lens should include cultivating an inclusive mindset towards counseling concepts and skills that play an influential role in shaping more collectivized worldviews.

### **Strength and Limitations**

This study presents several limitations. First, the research questions focus on the general understanding of IF in the education of counselors, rather than exploring a specific aspect of IF in depth, such as the role of instructor-student relationships in counseling student development. Further, although IFM-CE have been seen as belonging to a “particular cultural group” due to the commonality of having transitioned from a different country, set of cultures, and language to the U.S. and English, it is important to note that IFM-CE themselves are heterogeneous and have unique identities that should be better explored. We limited engagement with participants to one individual interview, email communication, and member-checking interactions.

Although the perspectives and experiences of the IFM-CE participants in this study can confirm existing research and provide valuable insights, it is important to recognize that the findings may not be representative of all IFM-CE nor transferable to all CE contexts. Furthermore, the perspectives of the first author, an international CE Ph.D. candidate and instructor, introduces a significant bias in relation to self-identification

experiences, teaching philosophies, acculturative models, and similarities of perspectives. Additionally, the language abilities of the participants and the first author, all being non-native English speakers, may have affected communication and potentially introduced bias.

However, the findings do contribute to future discussions and the advancement of studies on the nuances of IF activation for IFM-CE from diverse backgrounds. Also, CE instructors can utilize the six core IF in a variety of ways while teaching master's degree counseling students. The identification of the six core IF and its three main modes of articulation may help CE instructors and doctoral students explore different combinations of factors with the goal of grounding their practices more effectively and promoting cultural emphasis in counseling courses.

Specifically, understanding IF activation modes can help train doctoral students in teaching practices, develop better-equipped CE, and enhance their identities as educators. It can also aid internship supervisors in providing feedback, creating performance rubrics, and evaluating doctoral students' IF activation to support their development as instructors. The core IF and its articulation mode can further assist supervisors in developing competence-based remediation plans and grounding departmental criteria for teaching evaluation. Additionally, they can facilitate doctoral students' teaching performance's self-evaluation and peer-review. The strengths of this study findings emphasize on advancing CE instructors' self-efficacy to better equip future counselors for their professional practices.

## **Implications for Practice**

The IFM-CE of this study brings diverse suggestions about how to activate IF to improve instructional practices that link to an iterative approach based on instructors' self-efficacy that focus on improving the learning experience (Hubertz & Van Campenhout, 2022; Larson & Lockee, 2020; Waalkes et al., 2018) with emphasis on intentional communication, fostering community development, and cultural and social justice enhancement throughout transitive relationships (processual) that apply with master's degree counseling students. While some IF are specific to the IFM-CE's international backgrounds, such as cross-linguistic factors, most IF are applicable with CE from any background. The emphasis participants have on community through the activation of specific IF aligns with established teaching methodologies and theories in education; approaches such as experiential learning (Kolb & Kolb, 2018), flipped learning (Merlin-Knoblich et al., 2022; Park & Kim, 2022), connectivism (Larson & Lockee, 2020; Siemens et al., 2020), and community of inquiry (Fiock, 2020; Garrison, 2015) recognize the importance of a learning community in education. The IF participants employ to enhance their practices primarily fall into six core IF combined in different ways to enhance cultural-relational teaching: communication, community facilitation, decision-making, negotiation, pedagogical-andragogical skills and knowledge, and intercultural skills and knowledge.

Creating a learning community relies on the instructors' positive social presence, and success in activating group facilitation and communication skills to foster interactions and relationships, thereby promoting quality learning through key relational and interactive aspects. Implementing this approach in any course, enhances student

integration and enriches their learning experience. Specifically, the IFM-CE stresses the significance of instructors' deliberate decision-making and negotiation skills in selecting, prioritizing, and combining teaching approaches, content, strategies, and materials to enhance cognitive learning linked to the three main relationships of a community of learning: instructor-student relationships, student-student relationships, and student-self relationships. Engaging students in this process would provide them with multiple assignment options and support the development of their decision-making skills.

The perceptions and experiences of the IFM-CE in this study support the understanding of Akos et al. (2019), Barrio-Minton and Hightower (2020), and Swank and Houseknecht (2019), regarding CE programs taking responsibility for a competence-based emphasis and the need for personalized learning and ties to the use of andragogical and pedagogical elements to better prepare future counselors. Participants believe this is a critical factor in deepening knowledge and skills to better prepare classes and courses, which align with the basis of instructional design regarding the need for “designing within a theoretical context and with consideration of how individuals learn” (Larson & Lockee, 2020). Thus, improving foundational education background and advancing instructional skills is an important recommendation of this study that matches the views of other authors regarding shifting the focus of research and practice to ground ETP-CE (e.g., Barrio Minton, 2020; Barrio Minton & Hightower, 2020; Mallot et al., 2014).

Researchers in applied education suggest that fostering a sense of belonging is critical for retaining diversity (Ayala et al., 2021). The core IF related to decision-making also align with the commitment to and intentionality in advancing social justice through intercultural skills activation (Lei, 2023; Portera, 2014) and in avoiding the perpetuation

of colonized teaching practices (Ng et al., 2022; Williams et al., 2021) through the selection and use of different strategies. For example, creating a section for MSJCC enhancement linked to all courses, infusing culture and social justice as the interface of CE courses, promoting continued discussions, applying culturally sensitive assignments, and adopting materials that bring more diversity of perspectives. This systematic approach may be a feasible practice to enhance a cultural lens through the four developmental domains of MSJCC that Ratts et al. (2015) developed (i.e., self-awareness, worldview, relationship, and advocacy).

The deliberative and intensive application of strategies for fostering and solidifying learning across all instructional design include balancing cognitive and developmental iterative emphasis, teaching critical thinking about the learning experience itself (Hubertz & Van Campenhout, 2022; Larson & Lockee, 2020), incorporating peer review, providing opportunities for practical application of concepts in and outside of class (community-based approach), and teaching students how to develop self-directed learning skills. Furthermore, the activation of core IF factors benefit both students (by offering a sense of opportunity) and instructors (by promoting a sense of competence). These implications highlight the importance of instructor flexibility in activating IF in diverse ways (mode), adapting to the learning community and varying approaches across courses. The iterative process of IF activation in the six core IF improves a sense of belonging among students, advances self-reflection opportunities, and promotes a collective experience that supports meaningful learning experiences.

Competence with IFM-CE seems related to professional expertise closely tied to unique identities and the accumulation of diverse cultural-relational experiences as

bicultural individuals living and working in the U.S. As proposed by Waalkes et al. (2018), this competence can be linked to a deeper comprehension of the developmental requirements associated with teaching preparation that the IFM-CE of this study achieve through self-learning. This understanding adds to literature regarding CE instructor preparation emphasizing that rather than expecting doctoral students to independently recognize their own teaching needs and strengths, CE programs should strive to approach developmental needs and capabilities of future CE instructors. A priority in preparing future CE instructors should include fostering an emphasis on identifying relevant IF and its activation mode during CE teaching internships. By doing so, CE programs can deliberately structure teaching preparation programs to better align with counseling students' learning preferences and needs.

Implementing support and resources in CE programs to address the cross-cultural and context-related hardships IFM-CE face is essential to promote well-being in CE programs. One approach is to establish a model of mentorship that enhances both sides and does not solely focus on educating internationals to fit the context or conform; a "mentor with" process could be relevant, creating a formal space for the voice of international students and IFM-CE and cultural background within CE programs. The outcomes of the "mentorship with" approach would be utilized to enhance the preparation of future CE instructors regarding self-efficacy in addressing international populations. This approach would better support master's and doctoral international students and future international clients, ultimately improving counseling practice with any population.

### *Implications for Future Research*

A fruitful direction for future research is to aim for more specificity regarding the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that underpin effective IF. For example, a study delving deeply into the importance and tools of effective instructor-student relationships in CE could be enlightening in practical ways. A study exploring the deliberate and intensive mode that IFM-CE in this study use to activate IF can be instructive regarding optimal ETP-CE. Such studies could investigate the dimensions of IF activation in terms of combination, frequency, and manner. A longitudinal investigation spanning different ways to activate IF and its development in various CE programs, types of universities, and faculty positions would provide insights into context-related (external factors) differences in IF understandings, development, and application/activation.

Checking experiences of practice tied to teaching time variations would offer a perspective on divergent and convergent IF activation related to professional seniority, modalities of instruction, teaching positions, and types of universities. Future research could explore the distinctiveness of individual IFM-CE in connection to bicultural identity integration, bicultural competence, intercultural skills, intrinsic and contextual motivation, and their experiences in negotiating and maintaining adaptation to the U.S. culture, researchers could also examine cultural and ethnic diversity, different identities, backgrounds, and acculturation to better map personal aspects of IF activation. Exploring the experiences of cultural identity negotiation and professional identity development would provide a better understanding of IF and its implementation, by considering the complexities of navigating interactions with students, other faculty members, and programs to capture the range of IFM-CE experiences and IF variations.

Further study of IFM-CE experiences or strategies for effective preparation of international counseling students would include better investigating the "pipeline" of experiences shaping the interactions they encounter within CE contexts. This study could delve into the connections between IFM-CE experiences as students and their instructional style as faculty members, specifically exploring how it all relates to their bicultural backgrounds. The research would specifically focus on understanding how they navigate negotiations while preserving their identities and distinguishing what aspects are negotiable and non-negotiable. Additionally, advancing research on professional identity development of international students and IFM-CE would clarify differences and similarities compared to American students and faculty. This would enhance preparation practices within CE doctoral programs for all populations and cultural groups.

Finally, exploring the specific experiences and potential shifts of approaches related to skills, knowledge, dispositions, and behaviors that relates to acculturation and resilience development of IFM-CE and international students would support the understanding of performance development. Such study could examine how IFM-CE transition from a deficit to a strength-based approach (Oliveira-Teles, 2022; Interiano-Shiverdecker et al., 2022), along with the development of career adaptability based on critical consciousness growth (Balin et al., 2016; Diemer et al., 2022; Savickas, 2019). This study would help in better understanding the shift from investing in conformity to embracing self-appreciation and pride in their international background.

### **Conclusion**

This study contributes to CE research by exploring the perceptions of IFM-CE regarding IF, confirming previous research and providing insights to enhance the

preparation of future counselors. Our findings reinforce the instructor's significance in counseling learning, particularly the influence of IF on the instructor-student relationship. Our findings demonstrate that being deliberate and intensive, continuously applying wide-ranging approaches may define the strength of IF activation. The findings underscore four main understandings:

- IF are multifaceted, reflect instructors' identities, are confluent to all teaching related actions, and require intentionality to be effectively articulated.
- The significance of IF activation with the strengths observed in IFM-CE links to their bicultural competence and intercultural skills and contributes to student learning and development.
- The use of core IF with all teaching brings a practical relevance by integrating the exploration of IF into the professional development of CE doctoral students.
- There is value in and need to advance disciplinary understanding by exploring how IF contributes to ETP-CE.

Better understanding the experiences and perspectives of IFM-CE, the untapped resources they bring to the CE context, and how they apply their background in teaching practices to support the education of counselors is valuable to CE research.

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## APPENDIX

### Appendix A: Consent Form for Research Participation

#### Consent for Research Participation

**Research Title**

Insights of International Faculty into the Role of Instructor Factors in Educating Counselors: A Qualitative Study

**Researcher(s)**

Paula Lazarim (doctoral candidate) EPC, University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Dr. Jeff Cochran (faculty advisor), EPC, University of Tennessee, Knoxville

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

We are asking/inviting you to be in this study because you are an international faculty member with at least two semesters of full-time teaching experience in counseling master's degree courses in a CACREP-accredited counseling program in the United States.

**What is this research study about?**

The purpose of the research study is to better understand what and how instructor factors connect to counseling students' learning and development and thus add to the understanding of the effective teaching of counselors.

**How long will I be in the research study?**

If you agree to be in the study, your participation will last for approximately 90 to 100 minutes and will involve completing one pre-interview online form (survey) of about 5 minutes of demographic information, attending an individual online interview through Zoom lasting 45 to 60 minutes with the interview being video recorded and including live transcription (Zoom), and an optional follow up member checking of a synthesis of the initial themes identified in your interview a few weeks after your interview that will be send to you as a file attached to a protected system (UTK Vault System - <https://vault.utk.edu/>).

**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 first to sign a consent form and answer the short demographic form (survey) online. We will then meet online for the individual interview at a time convenient to you.

**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 at any time later. Either way, your decision won't affect your relationship with the researchers and/or the University of Tennessee.

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

You can stop your participation in this study at any time before the study is completed. If you decide to stop, simply email me to communicate your decision. In this case, any information already collected will be destroyed.

**Are there any possible risks to me?**

We don't know of any risks to you from being in the study. There is a remote possibility that someone could find out you were in this study or see your study information, but we believe this risk is minimal because of the procedures we use to protect your information. These procedures are described below in this document. Though we believe the risks to be low, it is possible that you may experience some discomfort when reflecting on your experiences within your counseling classes.

**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 effective teaching for counselors. We hope the knowledge gained from this study will benefit future counseling students and counselor educators.

**Will I be paid for being in this research study?**

Participating in this study is a volunteer decision and will not include any compensation for your contribution.

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

We will protect the confidentiality of your information by restricting access to data, de-identifying your personal information through fictitious names, and storing your information in a secure online platform that is password protected. Only the primary investigator, who is also the interviewer, will know your identity and have access to your information. Participants will receive a fictitious name immediately after the interview process. Data will initially be stored on a secure computer that is password protected after being de-identified and transferred to a UT Google Drive that is HIPAA protected. Even the faculty advisor will only interact with the de-identified data (using fictitious names). After the interviews are transcribed and validated by you, the recorded video and all evidence of your identification will be destroyed. If information from this study is

published or presented at scientific meetings, your name and other personal or identifying information will not be used.

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

We will keep your information to use for future research in an anonymous format. Your name and/or any other information that can directly identify you will be destroyed/deleted from all the data collected as part of the study.

#### **Who can answer my questions about this research study?**

If you have questions or concerns about this study, or experience a research related problem or injury, contact the researchers, Paula Lazarim, phone: 561-289-5680/email: [plazarim@vols.utk.edu](mailto:plazarim@vols.utk.edu) or Dr. Jeff Cochran (advisor/second author), email: [jcochr11@utk.edu](mailto:jcochr11@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](mailto:utkirb@utk.edu)

#### **Statement of Consent: Click the Button in the Qualtrics**

##### **Consent for use of images for the study data analysis**

I agree that video recording of me during the individual interview may be analyzed for research purposes.

**YES**

**NO**

Clicking the Qualtrics button below to confirm you have read this form and the research study has been explained to you. I have been given the opportunity to ask questions and my questions have been answered. If I have more questions, I have been told who to contact. By selecting agree below, I am agreeing to be in this study.

**Appendix B:** Invitation to Participate in the Research Project – Email and  
Screening/Flyer

**Section 1: Research Participation | Support within Recruitment Email**

**Research Title**

Insights of International Faculty into the Role of Instructor Factors in Educating Counselors: A Qualitative Study

Hello/Dear [Name],

My name is Paula Lazarim, and I am a doctoral candidate at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. I am contacting you to ask for your help in advertising my dissertation study entitled, “Insights of International Faculty into the Role of Instructor Factors in Educating Counselors.” This study was approved by the University of Tennessee (UTK), campus Knoxville’ Institutional Review Board, under the advice of Dr. Jeff Cochran.

I am interviewing international faculty currently teaching in the United States in a CACREP accredited program and I would appreciate your assistance in forwarding this information to any other counselor educators who may meet the criteria of this study. Please see the attached flyer with more information about the study including a link to access the study consent and the demographic forms. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Paula Lazarim, MS, Clinical Mental Health Counselor  
Doctoral Candidate, Counselor Education  
University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN  
[plazarim@vols.utk.edu](mailto:plazarim@vols.utk.edu)

**Section 2: Flyer | Call for Research Participants!**

**Invitation/Recruitment**

**Research Title:** Insights of International Faculty into the Role of Instructor Factors in Educating Counselors: A Qualitative Study

You are invited to participate in a research study that purpose is to explore the role of instructor factors across CACREP accredited counselor training programs in the US.

Specifically, this study aims to better understand CE international faculty members perspectives on the role of instructor factors in the education of counselors.

Please check below if you meet the criteria of this study!

To participate, you must self-identify as an international faculty member in CE that is:

1. From any nationality, speaking English as a second language
2. A full-time faculty member of a CACREP accredited counselor training program in the United States
3. Teaching any format (e.g., online, hybrid, or in-person) counseling courses to master's degree students
4. Having at least two semesters of teaching experience
5. Willing to completing one pre-interview online form (survey) of about 5 minutes of demographic information, participate in a 45 to 60 minutes Zoom video recorded individual interview, and develop an optional follow up member checking of the synthesis of the initial outcomes of your interview (it will be sent to you as a file attached to a protected system of communication)

Participation in this study is voluntary and will not include any compensation, but your contribution may help us to learn more about effective teaching for counselors!

Go to the following link if you are interested in participating in this study: [LINK](#) (*it will include the eligibility screening question below and the access to the consent form if the person meets the criteria for participation. After participant sign and submit the consent, the link will automatically redirect the person the demographic form*)

**Are you an international faculty member teaching in a CACREP-Accredited Program for at least two full semesters in a full-time position?**

Yes                       No (*if no, the screening/demo form will end*)

Please, feel free to contact me if you have any questions!

**Contact Information:** Paula Lazarim, MS, CMHC/Doctoral Candidate, Counselor Education [plazarim@vols.utk.edu](mailto:plazarim@vols.utk.edu), phone: 561-289-5680. EPC Department at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. Mentor/Advisor – Dr. Jeff Cochran ([jcochr11@utk.edu](mailto:jcochr11@utk.edu)).

## Appendix C: Pre-Interview Email

### Pre-Interview Email

#### Research Title

Insights of International Faculty into the Role of Instructor Factors in Educating Counselors: A Qualitative Study

Hello/Dear [Name],

Thank you for your willingness to participate in my dissertation research entitled “Insights of International Faculty into the Role of Instructor Factors in Educating Counselors: A Qualitative Study.” I am writing this email to arrange a convenient time for us to conduct your Zoom-based video recorded interview. I want to remind you that your participation in this study is voluntary, you may withdraw at any time before or during the interview, and you will have an opportunity to discuss with me and modify my understanding of your interview.

Please visit the Doodle poll link (<https://doodle.com/en/>) to provide your availability across the next week. I will make sure to find a time that is mutually convenient and follow up with you in email to confirm the time. I will also send you the Zoom link for the interview day and time.

Remember, I will be able to schedule your interview only after you read/sign the consent form and fill out the demographic form that you can access through the links you will find in the research flyer. It will take only a few minutes to complete these forms. Let me know if you need me to send you the flyer again with these both links.

Thank you again for your participation in this study. I look forward to getting our interview scheduled and to our conversation!

Sincerely,

Paula Lazarim, MS, Clinical Mental Health Counselor  
Doctoral Candidate, Counselor Education  
University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN  
[plazarim@vols.utk.edu](mailto:plazarim@vols.utk.edu)

## Appendix D: Pre-Interview Demographic Form

### Pre-Interview Demographic Form

#### Research Title

Insights of International Faculty into the Role of Instructor Factors in Educating Counselors: A Qualitative Study

#### Welcome to this Study!

I am interested in gaining a better understanding of who you are as I believe our identities should be honored in all instances. Thus, this form aims to collect information concerning your demographics and identities before the interview meeting. There is space at the end of the form for any additional thoughts and information that you see as necessary. Your answers to this form are very important to my research! Thank you for your time and willingness to contribute to this study.

#### Personal Information

**Name** (first and last names)?  
to up.

**Age** (years) Selection of a number from 18

**I prefer not to say** ( )

#### General Demographic, Identity and Cultural Background

**How do you identify yourself? Please select all options you identify with:**

- Cisgender Female/Woman
- Transwoman/Trans female
- Cisgender Male/Man
- Transman/Trans male
- Gender fluid
- Gender nonconforming
- Genderqueer
- Non-binary
- Others/Different identity. Please, specify: \_\_\_\_\_
- Prefer not to respond

**What country are you from?** \_\_\_\_\_

**With which race/ethnicity/nationality do you identify?** \_\_\_\_\_

**What is your mother language?** \_\_\_\_\_

**How long have you been living in the United States?** \_\_\_\_\_

**What else do you see as relevant about yourself, your identities, or your cultural background that might be important for me to know?** (Optional answer)

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**Counselor Education**

**What is the CE program and university where you are a faculty member?**

**In what modality do you teach: in-person; online; hybrid; all of them?**

**At what university and under which program name did you complete your doctoral degree?** \_\_\_\_\_

**How long have you been teaching in the U.S.?** \_\_\_\_\_

**What is the focus of the program in which you teach?**

- Clinical mental health counseling at the master's degree level
- School counseling at the master's degree level
- Both clinical mental health and school counseling
- Addiction counseling
- Different specialization at the master's level. Please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

**Which best describes your current faculty position?**

- Tenure track
- Full-time lecturer
- Clinical, with substantial teaching responsibilities
- Other/Different identity. Please, specify: \_\_\_\_\_

**What is your current rank as faculty member (e.g., assistant, associate, full professor)?** \_\_\_\_\_

**Please, include here any additional information that you consider relevant to share:**  
(Optional answer) \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix E: Semi-Structured Interviewing Guide

### Semi-Structured Interviewing Guide

#### Research Title

Insights of International Faculty into the Role of Instructor Factors in Educating Counselors: A Qualitative Study

#### Interview Contextualization | Opening Script

Thank you for giving your time in participating in this research study. It is a pleasure to have the chance to learn from stories of your experiences as an international faculty member in CE in the United States. I am convinced that the perspectives and experiences you will share in this interview will help me and others better understand the value of instructor factors for counseling students' learning and development.

#### Interview Process | Overview

This interview will take 45 to 60 minutes and will be recorded through Zoom. I will use follow-up questions to clarify my understanding. You are welcome to decline to answer any questions or to discontinue this interview at any point for any reason. You can also choose to refuse to allow the use of your interview in this study. Do you have any questions before we begin?

#### Pre-Interview | Presenting Definitions & Checking Questions

*Pre-Interview Demographic Data Confirmation (if necessary)*

Please confirm the aspects of your background from your answers to my demographic form (Pre-Interview Demographic Form answered before the interview process).

*Statement Prior the Interview: Defining Instructors' Factors*

I'll be asking you about instructor factors during our interview today. Broadly, we define for his study instructor factors as any aspects of the person, interactions, and expertise of the instructor that may contribute to student development. Frequently, instructor factors refer to particular teaching skills, including instructor-student relationships and instructional strategies for content delivery, and instructor dispositions, meaning the personal traits that instructors bring into their teaching and interactions with students.

#### Interview Process: Semi-Structured Interview Protocol

##### Introductory Questions

1. This is a question to get us warmed up: In your view, what is the purpose or aim of a counseling instructor?

##### Key Questions

2. Given the definition/your understanding of instructor factors, what instructor factors can you think of that you see as relevant for counseling students for effective learning and development?

*Follow-up questions (if necessary): Tell me more about ... or Give me an example of...*

1. How do you see these instructor factors connecting to the learning and development of counselors?

3. Some instructors and even students think that specific instructor factors are important or more effective. Please, tell me your thoughts about aspects of instructor factors that you believe are especially relevant for you (for instructors' effective teaching of counseling students).

*Follow-up questions (if necessary): Tell me more about ... or Give me an example of...*

1. Aspects of instructor factors that make instructor(s)' approach(es) effective for you.
  - a. The importance/role of instructor's skills for your teaching effectiveness
  - b. The importance/role of instructor's dispositions for teaching effectiveness
  - c. The importance/role of instructor's knowledge for teaching effectiveness
2. Tell me about specific(s) factor(s) that would be more helpful for counseling students learning and development
  - a. Perspective on teaching skills and/or personal dispositions
  - b. What do you think works best and how?
3. Tell me about specific instructor factors that may be particularly important with specific populations of students
  - a. Tell me about the role of specific instructor factors in counseling student learning and development that belong/self-identify with minoritized identities?
    - i. Tell me about the role of specific instructor factors in international counseling student development?
    - ii. To what degree do you think this is unique for international counseling students?
4. Are there any aspects of instructor factors you see as unhelpful to counseling students learning and development? Please explain:

4. Could you please tell me about your own instructor factors that you see supporting the effectiveness of your teaching?

*Follow-up questions (if necessary): Tell me more about ... or Give me an example of...:*

1. How do you see your identities and cultural background connecting to your approach to teaching?
  - a. How do you see aspects of who you are as a person relevant in your teaching?
2. How do you see your instructor factors connecting to your teaching?
  - a. How do you identify the impact of your instructor factors on your students?
  - b. What are the main instructor factors that you see as most helpful within your work toward the learning and development of counseling students?

### Closure/Closing Questions

5. Please, think about the most effective instructor factors that support teaching practice effectiveness. What are the three top factors that come to your mind (can be yours and/or idealistic factors)?

6. What else would you like to share about your perspectives and/or own experiences of instructor(s) factors?

### **Possible Follow up/Clarification/Probing Questions/Statements**

- You said/mentioned \_\_\_\_\_. Tell me more how/comment more about...
- You said/mentioned \_\_\_\_\_. Tell me more what/comment more about...
- You talked about \_\_\_\_\_. Please describe that in more detail...

### **Closing Script**

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this study and interview. If at any time you have any further questions or you would like to be removed from this study, please let me know.

### **Interview Checking Session Script**

I will contact you again by email in a few weeks to offer an optional member checking that is the opportunity to review a synthesis of the initial themes I extracted from your interview. You will offer you access the UTK Vault system (<https://vault.utk.edu/>) – that is a protected system -- to open the file of your interview's synthesis. I will ask you to send me back your feedback/comments in three days after receiving the initial findings. This checking enables you to review/validate the main aspects of your interview analysis and/or add any new meaning you see as relevant. In the meantime, let me know if any questions arise for you about the interview process.

**Appendix F: Member Checking/Interview Initial Findings Email/Access to Vault  
System**

**Member Checking: Initial Findings Validation Email**

**Research Title**

Insights of International Faculty into the Role of Instructor Factors in Educating  
Counselors: A Qualitative Study

Hello/Dear [Name],

Thank you again for sharing your experiences of instructor factors with me. As I noted on the day of your interview, I transcribed the content of your video-recorded interview and have gone through an initial interpretation of your report.

Thus, I am contacting you to share with you the synthesis of the initial data I extracted from your interview and ask if you would review it in three days and send me your feedback. You can access your interview outcomes through the UTK Vault system (<https://vault.utk.edu/>) message I sent to you with the access to your file into the vault system. I would require you send me your feedback also using the Vault system to make sure your information will be protected. To send me your feedback, you will need only answer to the Vault message you received including your comments in the body of the email and/or attaching a file.

I would be especially interested to hear any ideas or reflections that come to mind as you explore your interview initial findings and check if my initial interpretation matches your experiences. Additionally, I would like to let you know the fictitious name I created for you and have your approval or your suggestion for a new name.

If, for some reason, you decide to not review the member checking documents I will send to you, please let me know by answering this email. I can still share your fictitious name and answer any questions you may have about the study and/or your data information now and/or ahead. If for some reason you do not communicate with me or do not send it back in three days, I will consider that you declined this optional member checking, and I will move to the next step and use your data to support the next phases of the study analysis process.

I look forward to your reply and thank you again for your participation in this study!

Sincerely,

Paula Lazarim, MS, Clinical Mental Health Counselor  
Doctoral Candidate, Counselor Education  
University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN  
[plazarim@vols.utk.edu](mailto:plazarim@vols.utk.edu)

## CONCLUSION

The findings of this study align with previous studies that IF are multifaceted as the students' preferences for IF (Hurt-Avila et al., 2021) and that the role of IF is critical in fostering student engagement. Specifically, this study sheds light on the contributions of CE-IFM experiences and perspectives of IF and explores major themes as possible paths for CE doctoral students' preparation for teaching. By incorporating specific factors into their teaching approaches, participants in this study report improved instruction, higher motivation, and a better understanding of the interfaces of their teaching practices. They also note learning gains with students within IF implementation; these gains were evidenced through academic performance and learning advancement.

CE-IFM generated the understanding that IF strongly reflects instructors' identities and cultural backgrounds and seems pervasive across all CE teaching-related actions, similar to the findings of Golubovic et al. (2021). Further, CE-IFM reports regarding their intentionality in articulating IF to activate the learning community and enhance the teaching and learning process links to the idea of model vulnerability and the use of self as a tool for teaching (Ng et al., 2022). Our findings suggest that despite the connections to the uniqueness of each CE instructor, essential IF can be learned and should be present in the preparation of CE doctoral students and future instructors. The insights gained from exploring how CE-IFM perceives the roles of IF provide directions for research toward the intricacies of IF in CE. These findings reinforce the relevance of essential IF in ETP-CE and underscore the need for further investigation.

## VITA

Paula Lazarim is originally from Brazil and has lived in the U.S. for 10 years. She is Italo-Brazilian, bilingual Portuguese-English and intercultural Brazilian-American Chinese. With a background as a psychoanalyst and career counselor in Brazil, she ran her own business for many years until she and her husband decided to move to the U.S.

Lazarim has experience in clinical mental health and school counseling, international and career counseling, and higher education teaching, having worked for more than 15 years with international career transition, including cross-cultural services to expatriated and repatriated individuals and families in multiple countries. Motivated by her passion for counseling, cultures, people and academia, she decided to pursue her master's degree in clinical mental health counseling upon moving to the U.S.

After completing her master's at Nova Southeastern University, in Fort Lauderdale, FL, Lazarim transitioned into the full-time doctoral program in counselor education (CE) at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville, TN. During her doctoral studies, Lazarim worked as a Graduate Research Assistant and later as a Graduate Teaching Associate, where for three years she taught Counseling Skills sections to undergraduate students interested in the helping professions. Drawing from her prior expertise and intercultural experiences, Lazarim has developed various projects and training models that enhance cultural learning in CE. These include a mentorship project for intercultural competence development, an inter-university project for international dialogues with counseling students, an intercultural supervision approach, and a training model for intercultural skills development with counselors in training. As the primary investigator, she led a pilot study on the teaching and learning of counseling skills in

online/web-based counseling courses using a flipped classroom model. This study served as preparation for her dissertation project, which explored the role of CE instructor factors in the education of counselors.

Lazarim's engagement with the counseling community is strong, as demonstrated by her presenting at several conferences annually and serving in positions of leadership within CE and counseling organizations. Her theoretical framework includes narrative theory, relational cultural theory, Lewin's theory of planned change, the taxonomy of significant learning, and developmental career theories, with an emphasis on intercultural education, multicultural competence development, and social justice advocacy. She has vast intercultural experience spanning North and Latin America, Europe, and Asia, which enriches her perspective and informs her research and practice in the field of counseling.