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Online education has grown significantly in higher education despite a decline in overall enrollment (Allen & Seaman, 2015; U.S. Census, 2014). Notwithstanding the growing trend of online education, counselor education has been slower than many fields in adopting the online medium for providing professional training for counselors. However, the growing number of counselor education programs offering fully online counselor training indicates that this new approach to formal education is gaining momentum and acceptance within the field.

Counselor training is a distinctive form of educational training because it requires a combination of theory knowledge, skill development, advanced cognitive complexity, and personal self-awareness and reflection (Giovannelli, 2003; Ivey, 1994; Nelson & Neufeldt, 1998). The current body of research provides evidence that online counselor training can be effective in facilitating the development of specific student skills (Ilieva & Erguner-Tekinalp, 2012; Nelson, 2014), competencies (Ilieva & Erguner-Tekinalp, 2012; Chapman et al, 2011), and attributes (Perry, 2012). Although this research is helpful in understanding specific aspects of online counselor education, these narrowly-focused examinations have failed to provide evidence of how this growing modality of counselor training is being developed and implemented.

This study utilized a theoretical framework of constructivism, which posits that knowledge is constructed through understanding the experiences of those actively involved in a process (Dewey, 1916; Merriam & Bierema, 2013; Narayan, Rodriguez,

Araujo, Shaqlaih, & Moss, 2013). In the context of this study, counselor educators served as the entry point for developing a deep understanding of how online counselor training is being developed and implemented, as they experience all aspects of the counselor training process (Senge et al., 2000; Tallent-Runnels et al., 2006). This study utilized a Consensual Qualitative Research (CQR) (Hill, Thompson, & Williams, 1997) methodology to explore the experiences of Counselor Educators developing and delivering online counselor training. The CQR method was chosen because it allows individuals immersed in a phenomenon to give in-depth and rich descriptions of their experiences. CQR provides a rigorous examination of these experiences by using the consensus process of the research team to analyze the key themes from the participants' experiences and an external auditor to provide detailed feedback during the data analysis.

Findings from the current study revealed two *general* and seven *typical* themes across participants' experiences. This suggested that participants' experiences developing and delivering online counselor training were highly individualized. Despite the overall low frequency counts, several categories emerged that suggest there are commonalities among experiences of developing and delivering online counselor training. Three of the most common themes that emerged in this study were institutional support, educator-student connection, and student-fit for the online environment.

ONLINE COUNSELOR TRAINING: CHALLENGES AND SUCCESSES IN THE EXPERIENCES OF ONLINE COUNSELOR EDUCATORS

by

Daniel P. Hall

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APPROVAL PAGE

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Distance education has been utilized to overcome the geographical barriers associated with access to education for nearly two centuries. Isaac Pitman developed the first distance education experience in 1840 when he published an offer to teach shorthand writing by mail correspondence (Maeroff, 2003). In the years since Pitman's initial offering, distance education has evolved as new forms of technology, including radio, television, film, and computers, were created and made accessible to the public. Formal educational institutions have been utilizing the technologies that facilitated distance education since the early 1900's (Noble, 2001). These technologies have transformed the way that distance education, as well as traditional face-to-face education, are delivered and received (Ben-Jacob, Levin, & Ben-Jacob, 2000; Carnevale & Olsen, 2003). The most recent of these technologies is the internet, which has changed higher education on a scale much broader than any of the previous technologies (Bonk, 2001; Kisner, 2001).

In 2015, the number of students enrolled in online higher education grew by over nine percent, with over seven million students taking at least one online course (Allen & Seaman, 2015). It is noteworthy that the growth in online education occurred despite an overall decline in higher education enrollment of close to half a million students from 2013 to 2014 (U.S. Census, 2014). The increase in online higher education can be explained by consideration of the myriad of contextual factors that have emerged and

converged over the past two decades (Mayadas, Bourne, & Bacsich, 2009; Staley & Trinkle, 2011). Mayadas et al. found these factors included advances in technology, increased access to and affordability of technology, and the expanded educational and economic opportunities of reaching a growing population of potential students. Dykman and Davis (2008) suggested that online education is following a trend toward legitimacy that is similar to trends in business, finance, and information-systems, where the implementation of technology was initially questioned, but ultimately became widely accepted as a legitimate alternative to established ways of conducting business.

The advantages of online education are well documented and include increased access to education, increased student retention and degree completion rates, and more diverse student and faculty populations (Allen & Seaman, 2013). These advantages have led to online education becoming an increasingly prominent sector of the higher education system, with many universities now operating without traditional (physical) campuses (Aggarwal & Bento, 2000). Traditional institutions of higher education are embracing online approaches to education by integrating online offerings into their curricula at both the undergraduate and graduate levels (Ben-Jacob et al., 2000). Nearly one-third of all students enrolled in higher education are now taking at least one course online and 71% of higher education institutions are now offering at least one fully online degree program (Allen & Seaman, 2013).

Interestingly, the field of counselor education has been slower than many other disciplines to embrace the online modality of education and training. Lundberg (2000) suggested that this slow adoption rate might be caused by what is presumed by Counselor

Educators to be incongruence between the impersonal nature of computer technologies and the relational nature of counselor training. In addition to the philosophical incongruence, Counselor Educators have been slow in adopting online modalities of education because of a lack of training in utilizing online technologies (Walker, 2009). Lundberg proposed that as computer technologies move closer to replicating face-to-face interactions, the counseling profession might utilize these technologies at higher rates. Standards related to the technical training of counselor education doctoral students were recently developed by the Counsel for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) and have been discussed in training guidelines by the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES).

In the *2016 CACREP Standards*, preparing Counselor Educators in "effective approaches for online instruction" has been added to the *Doctoral Professional Identity* section (CACREP, 2015). This inclusion of online counselor training preparation is significant in acknowledging that this new modality of counselor education is here to stay and requires training that is differentiated from traditional face-to-face counselor training. ACES described the importance of online counselor training in the manuscript *Technical Competencies for Counselor Education Students: Recommended Guidelines for Program Development* (2007). The guidelines outlined recommend that Counselor Educators maintain "competence in the application of computer and related technology to assess the appropriateness of technology applications to teaching, practice and research" (ACES, 2007). By recommending that Counselor Educators maintain competence in online

teaching technologies, ACES has signified that the ability to utilize technology as a Counselor Educator is now an integral part of the counselor education profession.

To investigate how online technologies were being used within online counselor training, Wantz et al. (2003) conducted a survey of all CACREP accredited programs inquiring about their use of online technologies in their curriculum. Forty-two percent of participants indicated that some form of distance education was currently being used as a method of instruction in their program and 11 participating programs reported offering one or more courses completely online. Fast-forward to today and there are 12 fully online CACREP accredited counselor education programs, with all 12 offering master's degrees and three offering doctoral degrees (CACREP, 2015). This rapid growth over a 12-year span, from 11 online courses to 12 fully online programs, attests to the mounting support within the counselor education field for the online modality of counselor training.

Looking at larger trends of online counselor training utilization is beneficial in forming an understanding of how the counselor education field is embracing online technologies, yet reveals little about the how Counselor Educators are preparing, developing, and implementing this new modality of counselor training. Research examining various aspects of online higher education has validated that there are many differentiating factors between online and traditional modalities of higher education, such as technical training, institutional and faculty support, and knowledge of online-specific instructional design and andragogy (Mayadas, Bourne, & Bacsich, 2009; Shelton, 2010; Stevens, 2013; Tallent-Runnels et al., 2006). These differentiating factors are often

compounded by the nature of the academic training for any given discipline (Shelton, 2010; Tallent-Runnels et al., 2006).

Counselor training in any modality often involves high degrees of intra- and inter-personal reflection, skill development and demonstration, content delivery and discussion, and supervision (Coursol & Lewis, 2004; Morrissette & Gadbois, 2006). Transferring these components of the educational process into online formats adds levels of complexity that are not present in traditional face-to-face modalities (Ehlers, 2009; Hirner & Kochtanek, 2012; McGorry, 2003; Mitchell, 2010; Shelton, 2010). Very little is known about how transferring this unique form of professional training into an online format alters the educational process. Exploring and developing an understanding of the unique complexities that Counselor Educators face when providing online counselor training is needed to clarify critical elements of this unique approach to training.

The overall body of research related to online education more broadly is quite robust and there is a small but growing body of research into online counselor training specifically. However, the extant research related to online counselor training has been narrowly focused. Areas that have been explored include specific competency and skill development (Ilieva & Erguner-Tekinalp, 2012; Nelson, 2014); clinical supervision (Abbass et al., 2011; Chapman, Baker, Nassar-McMillan, & Gerler, 2011; Coker, Jones, Staples, & Harbach, 2002; Conn, Roberts, & Powell, 2009; Perry, 2012; Rousmaniere, Abbass, & Frederickson, 2014; Rousmaniere & Frederickson, 2013; Vaccaro & Lambie, 2007); student perceptions of technology in their learning (Ekong, 2006: Lundberg, 2000); and ethical considerations for the use of technology in counselor education

(Abbass et al., 2011; Bernard & Goodyear, 2004; Rousmaniere et al., 2014; Vaccaro & Lambie, 2007).

Facilitating counselor-in-training (CIT) competency and skill development are critical responsibilities of counselor educators. Ilieva and Erguner-Tekinalp (2012) used an online wiki to enhance multicultural competency development in their traditional face-to-face multicultural counseling course. They found that online technologies can be beneficial in the process of facilitating multicultural competency development among CIT. However, Ilieva and Erguner-Tekinalp (2012) used online technologies to enhance a traditional face-to-face classroom experience, which does not provide evidence that multicultural competency development can be facilitated in a fully online environment. Online technologies have also been utilized in facilitating skill development among CIT. Nelson (2014) found that online technologies were able to facilitate CIT learning of basic counseling microskills, but became less useful once the foundational skills had been learned and CITs needed more advanced skill development. This suggests that there are limitations in facilitating the full spectrum of skill development in CITs using online modalities.

Clinical supervision is an area of online counselor training that has received attention from researchers. Researchers have found that online clinical supervision provides access to qualified supervisors (Rousmaniere et al., 2014), access to clinical supervision for CITs in rural or international settings (Abbass et al., 2011), convenience for supervisors and CITs (Abbas et al., 2011; Chapman et al., 2011), increased diversity of supervisees and CITs (Chapman et al., 2011), and cost-effectiveness for educational

institutions (Vaccaro & Lambie, 2007). Online clinical supervision has been found to provide a quality of experience equivalent to face-to-face supervision (Conn et al., 2009; Coker et al., 2001) and is effective in facilitating CIT competence (Chapman et al, 2011) and professional identity development (Perry, 2012).

These findings indicate that the online format is an effective modality of providing clinical supervision, but researchers have also discovered drawbacks to delivering supervision online. Although online technologies are becoming more advanced and more widely available, they do not provide an identical experience to face-to-face interpersonal interaction (Rousmaniere et al., 2014). For example, online formats are limited by a decreased ability to recognize non-verbal communications that are often attended to in face-to-face clinical supervision (Coker et al, 2002; Rousmaniere et al., 2014). There is no evidence as to how this distortion of non-verbal communication affects the supervisory relationship or how it affects other areas of Counselor Educator-CIT interaction. Online delivery of clinical supervision also presents unique ethical concerns, such as supervisor-CIT communication that is Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) compliant and institutional liability insurance that provides coverage for online supervision (Abbass et al., 2011; Rousmaniere et al., 2014; Vaccaro & Lambie, 2007).

Counselor training is a distinctive form of educational training because it requires a combination of theory knowledge, skill development, advanced cognitive complexity, and personal self-awareness and reflection (Nelson & Neufeldt, 1998). In facilitating this wide variation of learning, Counselor Educators are faced with the task of moving

beyond simple content delivery to creating learning environments in which students can construct and integrate new knowledge with their own experiences and awareness, while also demonstrating skill acquisition and application (Nelson & Neufeldt, 1998). The current body of research related to online counselor training suggests that this modality can effectively facilitate the counselor training process. However, the larger body of literature into online education includes critical elements of delivering effective online education that have, to date, remained unexamined relative to the counselor education field.

Purpose of the Study

Given the rapid expansion of online counselor training, along with the limited research into how Counselor Educators are approaching this new modality of training, the purpose of the current study is to develop an in-depth understanding of the lived experiences of counselor educators who are developing and delivering online counselor training in CACREP-accredited programs. This study utilizes a theoretical framework of constructivism, which posits that knowledge is constructed through understanding the experiences of those actively involved in a process (Dewey, 1916; Merriam & Bierema, 2013; Narayan, Rodriguez, Araujo, Shaqlaih, & Moss, 2013). In the context of this study, counselor educators serve as the entry point for developing a deep understanding of how online counselor training is being developed and implemented, as they experience all aspects of the counselor training process (Senge et al., 2000; Tallent-Runnels et al., 2006). The understandings gained from this study will help to establish: a) the essential elements that comprise the experiences of Counselor Educators translating their teaching

philosophy and practice into the online environment, b) the successes and challenges Counselor Educators have experienced in developing and implementing online counselor training, and c) Counselor Educators experiences of support in developing and implementing online counselor training. To explore the overarching question guiding this research, "What are the experiences of Counselor Educators who develop and deliver online counselor training?" a Consensual Qualitative Research (CQR) design will be utilized.

Statement of the Problem

Online counselor training is increasingly used as an educational modality, however no researchers have investigated how Counselor Educators are experiencing the development and delivery of this training modality. The current body of research provides evidence that online counselor training can be an effective modality for facilitating the development of specific student skills (Ilieva & Erguner-Tekinalp, 2012; Nelson, 2014), competencies (Ilieva & Erguner-Tekinalp, 2012; Chapman et al, 2011), and attributes (Perry, 2012), as well as conceptual examinations of the ethics of online counselor training. Although this research is helpful in understanding specific aspects of online counselor education, these narrowly-focused examinations have failed to provide a broader understanding of the experiences of educators who train counselors online, which is foundational for understanding how this modality of training is being developed and implemented in the counselor education field (McLean, Cilliers, & Van Wyk, 2008). Researchers across other disciplines have validated that online education creates unique experiences that challenge educators' approaches to teaching (e.g., content delivery,

educator-student communication, student-student communication, activity facilitation) (Mason & Weller, 2000; Schrum & Benson, 2002; Tallent-Runnels et al., 2006). For educators who have never facilitated or been the recipient of online education, venturing into online teaching can feel disorienting and incongruent with how they approach teaching (Mayadas et al., 2009). Thus, many educators have engaged online teaching with very little preparation or knowledge of how to facilitate learning in online environments (Santilli and Beck, 2005). Within the counselor education field, the uniqueness of an online format is compounded by the type of professional training required, which typically involves high levels of intra- and inter-personal reflection, skill development and demonstration, content delivery and discussion, and supervision (Coursol & Lewis, 2004; Morrissette & Gadbois, 2006). To better understand these unique experiences within online counselor training, a deeper exploration into the experiences of online Counselor Educators is needed. The current research study will provide a deeper understanding of online counselor training by exploring in-depth the experiences of Counselor Educators training counselors online. Directions for future research on how the field may move forward in creating meaningful and high quality teaching and learning experiences for counselor education programs utilizing online technologies will be developed.

Research Questions

The principal question guiding this CQR study is: What are the experiences of Counselor Educators who develop and deliver online counselor training?

The following sub-questions will be explored:

a. How do Counselor Educators describe their experiences of translating their teaching philosophy and practice into the online environment?
b. How do Counselor Educators describe the successes and challenges they have experienced in developing and delivering online counselor training?
c. How do Counselor Educators describe their experiences of support in developing and delivering online counselor training?

Need for the Study

The current study will address critical gaps in the online counselor training literature. Researchers of online counselor training have either focused on specific student outcomes (Chapman, Baker, Nassar-McMillan, & Gerler, 2011; Coker, Jones, Staples, & Harbach, 2002; Conn, Roberts, & Powell, 2009; Ekong, 2006; Ilieva & Erguner-Tekinalp, 2012; Lundberg, 2000; Perry, 2012; Rousmaniere, Abbass, & Frederickson, 2014; Rousmaniere & Frederickson, 2013; Vaccaro & Lambie, 2007) or broad conceptual explorations of the ethical implications of using the online modality (Abbass et al., 2011; Rousmaniere et al., 2014; Vaccaro & Lambie, 2007). The rationales for these studies have been based in directly translating the need to measure student-learning outcomes in traditional face-to-face counselor education programs to the same need in online counselor education. Although such research is needed, it does little to illuminate the unique experiences of those actively engaged in this new and growing form of counselor training. Understanding the experiences of educators engaged in online counselor training is a critical component in facilitating and supporting successful online

programs (Tallent-Runnels et al., 2006). This understanding will serve as the foundation for future research aiming to better understand or improve the areas of online counselor training that are presenting challenges or concerns for online Counselor Educators. To develop a deep comprehension of online counselor training, exploration must begin at the individual level of those who are actively involved in the processes of developing and delivering online counselor training (Senge et al., 2000). Therefore, the proposed study will enhance understanding of the success and challenges of online counselor training by exploring the experiences of Counselor Educators who develop and deliver such training.

Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this study, the following are operational definitions of terms:

1. *Distance Education* – Formalized learning opportunities that are delivered through information and communication technologies where the educator and the student are separated by geography, time, and/or both (Camevale & Olsen, 2003; Wantz et al., 2003).
2. *Face-to-face Education* – Also termed traditional learning, this modality of education involves the educator and students meeting in the same time and place.
3. *Online Education* – Education that takes place 80-100% through the use of the internet on computer or mobile technologies (Allen & Seaman, 2013).
4. *Hybrid Education* – An educational modality that utilizes both face-to-face and online educational formats, but where online components make-up less than 80% of instruction (Allen & Seaman, 2013; Bonk, 2001).

5. *Online Counselor Training* – Includes the responsibilities of counselor educators engaged in online counselor training, such as: curriculum development, teaching, clinical supervision, evaluation, and communications with students and faculty.
6. *Experience* – The combination of continuity and interaction. The term continuity refers to how past events construct the present. The term interaction refers to the interface of previous experiences with present circumstances to construct present experience. These two terms combine to define how past and present come together and are influenced by physical, social, and cultural settings (Dewey, 1938).

Brief Overview

This dissertation is organized into five chapters. The first chapter introduces the topics of online education and online counselor education, a statement of the problem, purpose of the study, need for study, research questions, and operational definitions. The second chapter includes a review of relevant literature, including theoretical and empirical support for the current research. Chapter three provides a detailed description of the research design and methodology used in the current study, including sampling procedures and interview development, procedures and the pilot study. Chapter four will include the results of the analyses of the interviews. The fifth and final chapter will provide a discussion of the results, implications for the counselor education field, recommendations for future research, and limitations of the current study.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

This chapter provides a detailed overview of the foundational literature for the current study as introduced in Chapter I, beginning with a review of the historical development of distance and online education and the myriad factors that inform online teaching. Next, the literature relevant to online counselor training will be reviewed. Finally, the literature specific to Counselor Educator teaching preparation will be presented. Supporting literature in each of these areas will be identified and explored in relation to the present study.

Distance and Online Education

The definitions of distance education have evolved over time as new means of communication and technology have shaped the very nature of distance education. The central definitional element that has remained stable throughout the evolution of distance education is the quasi-permanent separation of the teacher and learner within the educational relationship (Keegan, 1988). In 1988, Keegan reviewed the literature on various forms of distance education to develop a comprehensive definition that contained five essential elements that constitute distance education: 1) a quasi-permanent separation of the teacher and learner, 2) influence of an educational institution in the planning and preparation of learning materials and student support services, 3) utilization of technical

media in content delivery, 4) utilization of technology for two-way communication between teacher and learner, and 5) predominance of individualized learning compared to group learning. Although distance education has evolved since Keegan's proposed definition, the characterization still holds true and is frequently referred to in the literature on the most common form of distance education today, online education.

Defining online education typically focuses on the percentage of the teaching and learning process that takes place within an online environment. In one of the largest studies of online education in the United States, Allen and Seaman (2015) define online education as 80% or more of the course content and interaction taking place online. Hybrid or blended education is defined as between 30-79% of education taking place online and web-facilitated education is between one and 29% of education taking place online (Allen and Seaman, 2015). Courses that use Learning Management Systems (LMSs), such as Blackboard, Canvas, or Moodle, for small portions of the course, such as content delivery or assignment submission, are considered web-facilitated education. Traditional education is defined as no online technology being used for any portion of a course (Allen & Seaman, 2015).

History of Distance and Online Education

Distance education is not a new concept. The first recorded distance education was instituted by Isaac Pitman in Great Britain when he published an offer to teach shorthand writing by mail in 1840 (Maeroff, 2003). Pitman was soon followed by a wave of individuals and institutions offering what was termed correspondence education. The first record of distance or correspondence education offerings in the United States came

with Anna Tickmor's founding of the Society to Encourage Studies at Home in 1873 (Caruth & Caruth, 2013). The Society to Encourage Studies at Home was located in Boston, Massachusetts and provided educational offerings in English, History, Science, French, German, and Art by mail correspondence. The purpose of Tickmor's correspondence offerings was to provide formal educational opportunities to women at a time when educational access was predominantly restricted to males (Caruth & Caruth, 2013). In its 24 years of existence, the Society to Encourage Studies at Home provided correspondence education to over seven-thousand women (Caruth & Caruth, 2013). By 1926 there were over 300 educational institutions offering this new type of formal teaching and learning (Noble, 2001).

As technologies have evolved since the first correspondence education, they have been readily incorporated into distance education. Technologies such as radio, film, television, and the internet have all transformed the way that distance education, as well as traditional face-to-face education, are delivered and received. (Ben-Jacob et al., 2000; Carnevale & Olsen, 2003). The most recent of these technologies, the internet, has changed the face of higher education on a scale much broader than any previous technologies (Bonk, 2001; Kisner, 2001). The use of the internet in facilitating online education first occurred in the for-profit higher education sector. In 1989, the University of Phoenix enrolled its first students in an online curriculum for its Master's in Business Administration degree (Levine, 1997). The University of Phoenix now enrolls over 300,000 students in its online higher education programs, which demonstrates the rapid growth of online education in the past two decades. (Chronicle of Higher Education,

2010). Since the first online higher education offering, the influence of the internet has rippled through and changed many aspects of the higher education sector. Therefore, the many individuals (e.g. students, faculty, administrators) that are involved in higher education are tasked with navigating the changing educational landscape.

Prevalence and Perceptions of Online Education

Overall student enrollment in higher education institutions has declined in recent years, with the most recent United States Census showing a decline in enrollment of close to half a million students from 2012 to 2013 (U.S. Census, 2014). One area of the higher education sector that has demonstrated resistance to this trend of enrollment reduction and has experienced growth in recent years is online higher education. In their annual study of online higher education in the United States, Allen and Seaman (2015) surveyed over two-thousand higher education institutions and combined their data with the National Center for Educational Statistics' Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDs) data on 4,891 higher education institutions to form a comprehensive understanding of the nature of online higher education.

In 2014, more than 7 million students, or around thirty-four percent of the total higher education student population, took at least one online course (Allen & Seaman, 2015). Unfortunately, this survey did not include information on how many educators are teaching online, but 7 million students had learning experiences that were facilitated and shaped by online educators. Allen and Seaman reported that growth rates for online course offerings declined from 2013 to 2014, but still remained higher than the overall enrollment growth rates in higher education. Enrollment in private for-profit four-year

institutions accounted for the slowing growth rate, as they experienced a decline of almost nine percent in online enrollment numbers (Allen & Seaman, 2015). Public four-year institutions and private non-profit four-year institutions both experienced increased growth rates for online enrollment with seven percent and thirteen percent growth, respectively (Allen & Seaman, 2015).

As online education enrollment continues to grow, educational institutions are considering the role of online courses in their academic offerings. Allen and Seaman (2015) reported that the percentage of academic leaders that consider online education to be critical in their institution's long-term strategy was at an all-time high of seventy-one percent. In 2002, when Allen and Seaman began their survey, less than fifty percent of academic leaders reported that online education was critical in their institution's long-term strategy (Allen & Seaman, 2015). This growth rate of nearly fifty-percent in 13 years indicates that online education is gaining legitimacy as foundational aspect of educational institutions' offerings. It is worth noting that the greatest increase in this area is among private for-profit four-year institutions, whereas public four-year institutions and private non-profit four-year institutions remained relatively stable year-to-year.

The increase in online higher education can be understood by looking at the myriad contextual factors that have emerged and converged over the past two decades (Mayadas, Bourne, & Bacsich, 2009; Staley & Trinkle, 2011). These factors include advances in technology, increased access to and affordability of technology, and the expanded educational and economic opportunities of reaching a growing population of potential students (Mayadas et al., 2009). Dykman and Davis (2008) suggested that

online education is following a trend toward legitimacy that is similar to the trends in business, finance, and information-systems, where the implementation of technology was questioned at first, but ultimately became widely accepted as a legitimate alternative to established ways of doing things. As the legitimacy and utilization of online education increases in higher education, increasing numbers of educators are going to be transitioning into the role of teaching online.

Teaching Online

As online education continues to expand in the higher education sector, greater numbers of educators are going to be engaging this teaching modality. The Institute for Higher Education Policy (IHEP, 2000) recognized the growing impact of the internet in higher education and developed quality standards specific for online education. IHEP (2000) borrowed quality standards that were already in place for distance education, which at the time did not include online education, and applied them to the unique contextual elements of online education. The results of IHEP's (2000) study led to the development of 24 benchmarks for ensuring quality in online education. It should be noted that online education at the time consisted almost exclusively of asynchronous teaching and learning methods.

To keep pace with technological innovation and advancement in higher education, Shelton (2010) conducted a Delphi study of 43 online educational program administrators to update the quality standards developed by IHEP (2000) and to develop a quality assessment scorecard for online educational programs. The Delphi panel concluded that all 24 standards remained relevant, but revisions were made to update all but one of the

standards. Based on the updated standards, the Delphi panel developed 45 scorecard indicators across nine categories: 1) Institutional Support, 2) Technology Support, 3) Course Development/Instructional Design, 4) Teaching and Learning, 5) Course Structure, 6) Student Support, 7) Social and Student Engagement, 8) Faculty Support, and 9) Evaluation and Assessment. These categories of quality assurance were developed with the intention of providing a comprehensive overview of the numerous elements of online education.

Although this study does not aim to directly assess quality assurance in online counselor training, educators influence, or are influenced by, all of these areas of quality assurance in online higher education. Thus, examining and understanding educators' experiences has proven to be an effective means for developing knowledge of how online education is being cultivated and implemented (McLean, Cilliers, & Van Wyk, 2008). When surveying the online teaching literature, several key areas of research emerge that support many of Shelton's quality assurance categories. Taken together, these key areas of research combine to form a thorough depiction of the various aspects of online teaching. The pertinent research in each of these key areas will be examined in the following sections.

Online Teaching Preparation

Online education is a relatively new trend in higher education, thus many educators received their preparation for teaching before online education became a prominent aspect of higher education (Chen & Looi, 1998; Christie & Garrote Jurado, 2009). Multiple researchers have found that educators are making the transition to

teaching in the online environment with little to no familiarity or modality-specific preparation in online teaching best-practices (Mason & Weller, 2000; Schrum & Benson, 2002; Tallent-Runnels et al., 2006). This lack of training opportunities and professional development has been brought up as an ethical consideration for educational institutions pursuing online education as it can lead to ineffective educational experiences for students (Gibbons & Wentworth, 2001). The mismatch between the growing implementation of online education and the lack of educator preparation to teach in the online context has led to a call throughout the online teaching literature for online specific teaching preparation.

Educators learn the practice of online teaching in various ways. The literature on online teaching preparation frames two major categories of preparation, formal and informal. Formal preparation typically involves an entity, such as a university, department, or professional organization, developing and implementing training (Schneckenberg, 2010). Examples of formal preparation offerings include workshops, courses, and webinars. Informal preparation involves more independent and self-directed forms of learning and includes practices such as participation in learning/interest/social networks (Veletsianos & Kimmons, 2012), peer-mentoring and consultation (Dempsey, Fisher, Wright & Anderton, 2008; Lackey, 2011), independent research (Perreault, Waldman, Alexander, and Zhao, 2008), and trial and error in online teaching practices (Perreault et al., 2008; Badge, Cann, & Scott, 2005).

Because of its self-directed nature, informal online teaching preparation is available to any educator that has the intrinsic motivation, time, and resources to learn

independently (Perreault et al., 2008). On the other hand, formal online teaching preparation is reliant upon an outside entity to organize, offer, and implement the training (Schneckenberg, 2010). Many educators have access to some form of formal online teaching preparation through their educational institutions. In 2011, Allen and Seaman found that 80% of higher education institutions offered some form of formal online teaching training for their faculty members. Unfortunately, Allen and Seaman's (2011) survey did not provide information on what specific types of formal learning opportunities these higher education institutions offered, how many online educators participated in these offerings, or how educators are informally preparing for online teaching. Although preparation has been identified as a key aspect of online teaching, little is known about what types of preparation educators, and more specifically, counselor educators, are currently engaging or how those preparations are influencing their teaching practice.

Developing and Designing Online Education

One critical aspect of teaching in online education is the instructional design process used for creating online learning experiences so that they are engaging, stimulating, and allow students to develop meaningful learning experiences. In a survey of 69 higher education institutions and over 10,000 faculty members, Seaman (2009) found that 34% of faculty had developed an online course. Instructional development and design involves the intentional integration of andragogy, purposeful learning task construction, and the available technologies to enhance learners' communications and content engagement (Altay, 2014; Goodyear, Salmon, Spector, Steeples, & Tickner,

2001; Huang, Hsin, & Chiu, 2010; Rao & Tanners, 2011). Lee and Hirumi (2004) found that instructional design was one of the most essential skills for online teaching, as many teaching strategies that are typically used in traditional teaching might not directly translate to the online environment. Strategies for common teaching tasks such as presenting course content, assessing students' learning styles and needs, facilitating discussion and class activities, and providing support for students all require different approaches and skills in the online environment (Lee & Hirumi, 2004).

Instructional development and design is a vital, yet often neglected, component of online education (Crawford-Ferre & Wiest, 2012; Puzziferro & Shelton, 2008; Stevens, 2013). Many faculty members never experienced online education in their own educational development and are being placed in the position of teaching online without the appropriate level of professional development and preparation for engaging this modality of education effectively (Chen & Looi, 1998; Mason & Weller, 2000; Tallent-Runnels et al., 2006). Unfortunately, this has led many educators to simply transfer their traditional courses directly into the online environment, with little knowledge of the contextual differences between traditional and online teaching and learning. Santilli and Beck (2005) found that in one online graduate program where 47 educators were engaged in online teaching, only 25% received training in online course development. This neglect is problematic as Perreault, Waldman, Alexander, and Zhao (2002) found that knowledge and training in instructional design was a critical component of an online educator's ability to effectively implement online learning, as many educators engage in online

teaching without the knowledge of how to link instructional design with intended student learning outcomes (Chou, 2004).

Due to a lack of online instructional design preparation educators are at times supported in the instructional design process by graphic designers, program coordinators, technology experts, online instructional designers, or other professionals (Howell, et al., 2002; Paulson, 2002; Waldman et al., 2002). Bennett and Lockyer (2004) found that educators engage in this type of collaboration with other professionals to a greater extent in the designing and delivering of online courses compared to traditional courses, which validates that educators are less prepared for the online modality of teaching. This method of co-constructed curriculum design has been termed the "boutique approach" (Hartman & Truman-Davis, 2001) or the "collegial model" of course development (Bates & Poole, 2003). Although having access to these external supports can be helpful, not all online educators have access to external support for designing and implementing online courses. In Seaman's (2009) survey of over 10,000 faculty members, 70% reported that their institution's support for online course development and design was average or below average. Bates and Poole (2003) described this as the "Lone Ranger model" of course design in which the online educator is solely responsible for developing course content, design, and implementation. This means that many educators are designing and developing online courses without sufficient preparation or institutional support for the online course design process.

There are numerous online instructional design philosophies and models in the literature, but two that have received significant attention are universal instructional

design (UID) and user-centered instructional design (UCID) (Altay, 2014; Huang, Hsin, & Chiu, 2010; Rao & Tanners, 2011). These two approaches to instructional design are not wholly representative of the online instructional design literature, but they do provide examples of the key components that form instructional design philosophy and implementation. What these two approaches to instructional design have in common is the intentional combination and integration of andragogy and technological tools in the design process. Aside from these commonalities, these two evidence-based design philosophies take very different approaches to the design and implementation of online learning.

UID was developed within the architecture field as an environmental design philosophy for creating physical environments that are widely accessible to a diverse population (Burgstahler, 2008; McGuire, Scott, & Shaw, 2003; Rao & Tanners, 2011). When these universal design principles are transferred into instructional design, the aim is to create a learning environment where students can access information, communicate, and convey their knowledge in a variety of formats so that they can personally tailor their learning experience (Basham, Israel, Garden, Poth, & Winston, 2010; Black, Weinberg, & Brodwin, 2014; DeVore, Stuart, & Riall, 2008). For example, students may be given the option of selecting between text or audio versions of course readings, or the option of writing a paper or using a creative multi-media approach to demonstrate their learning. Utilizing the UID approach, students are given multiple paths to achieving a common learning objective (Black, Weinberg, & Browdwin, 2014). There is an underlying

constructivist philosophy in the UID approach that allows students to develop their learning experiences in ways that are personally relevant and meaningful.

UID has proven to be a useful shift from the one-size-fits-all educational model. Students have reported high levels of appreciation for having options in how they both engage the course materials and demonstrated their knowledge (Goff & Higbee, 2008; Roberts, Park, Brown, & Cook, 2011). However, in two separate reviews of the literature on UID, Rao, Ok, and Bryant (2014) and Roberts et al. (2011) found that much of the current body of literature is conceptual in nature and the need exists for more empirical investigation into the experiences and outcomes for faculty and students engaged in UID instructional frameworks.

Writers in the UID literature provide an eight step systematic framework for educators to follow during the course planning and development process (Goff & Higbee, 2008). Goff and Higbee (2008) presented the steps in the UID process as 1) Creating welcoming classrooms; 2) Determining essential components of a course; 3) Communicating clear expectations; 4) Providing timely and constructive feedback; 5) Exploring use of natural supports for learning, including technology; 6) Designing teaching methods that consider diverse learning styles, abilities, ways of knowing, and previous experience and background knowledge; 7) Creating multiple ways of students to demonstrate their knowledge; and 8) Promoting interaction among and between faculty and students. The fundamental goal of the UID framework is to allow students to have the autonomy to engage learning in ways they find most helpful and personally meaningful (Rao & Tanners, 2011).

A different approach to instructional design is user-centered instructional design (UCID). UCID was developed as an environmental design philosophy that stands juxtaposed to UID. In place of UID's wide applicability, UCID takes a very personalized approach to educational design that provides end-users (students) with a product that is specifically tailored to their needs. Where UCID differs significantly from UID is in the user-experience of the course (Bias, Marty, & Douglas, 2012). Instead of presenting all students enrolled in a course with a variety of options, an educator employing UCID engages students in the course development process to co-create a tailored user-experience where student engagement with course materials, communications, and demonstration of knowledge options are all streamlined during the planning process and refined throughout the course (Altay, 2014).

Much of the literature on UCID is in the library science and information systems field where it has been used to create personalized library website user-interfaces based on users search patterns and behaviors, chosen field of study, and expressed needs (Bordac & Rainwater, 2008; LaGuardia, 2011; Tomeo, 2012). The process of UCID is labor intensive for the creator/designer of the user-experience, making it difficult for an instructor with large numbers of students enrolled in a course to employ this approach (Altay, 2014). However, as contextual technologies continue to advance, much of this customization work may shift from the educator to a software program, allowing UCID to reach a wider audience.

UID and UCID represent two well-established models of instructional design that, although different in some ways, both utilize an intentional combination of andragogy

and technological tools in the framing of learning experiences. Unfortunately, many educators engage online education without foundational knowledge of how to facilitate the integration of a philosophical approach to teaching with the tools that are available to facilitate student learning (Stevens, 2013). Examining the two major components of instructional design, andragogy and technological tools, provides further support for why a systematic approach to the instructional design process is an important aspect of developing meaningful online educational experiences.

Andragogy. Teaching philosophy should always take into account who is being taught (Crawford-Ferre & West, 2012). When examining the literature in online higher education, andragogy is a frequently utilized term for teaching philosophy, as it refers to theories of teaching that are specifically constructed for adult learners (Knowles, Holton III, & Swanson, 1998; Merriam & Bierema, 2013). Knowles et al. (2013) identified five principles as foundational to andragogic practice. The first is that adult learners need to be informed about the learning process, including what will be learned, how it will be learned, and the importance of the learning. The second principle is that adult learners need to be able to take control of the techniques and purpose of the learning process. Third, there needs to be a recognition that adult learners enter the learning process with prior experiences that impact, for better or worse, how the learner interprets and integrates new knowledge and experience. The fourth principle states that adult learners enter a state of learning readiness when they encounter life situations in which their previous knowledge and experience are not adequate to address the present situation. Fifth, adult learners have a problem-orientation to learning that creates motivation when

put into a real-world context. Together, these five principles of andragogy provide a contextual foundation for understanding how educators can best work with adult learners.

There is strong support in the online education literature that online teaching needs its own set of andragogies, as the practice is far different than traditional face-to-face teaching (Laat, Lally, Lipponen & Simmons, 2007). The proponents of online specific andragogies focus on the implementation of online teaching as the necessitating factor of unique philosophical approaches. Due to the differences of having to use electronic tools as the primary or sole means of communication, many researchers have developed models of andragogy that are unique to the online teaching environment (Copolla, Hiltz, & Rotter, 2002; Salmon, 2004). These models include teacher roles such as pedagogical, social, managerial, technical, process facilitator, content facilitator, technologist, and designer (Berge, 2009; Goodyear, Salmon, Spector, Steeples, & Tickner, 2001). Although all of these roles can be of importance with any teaching modality, online educators face the added difficulty of determining how to navigate these roles through an electronic medium (Shea et al. 2001).

Interestingly, within the online andragogy literature there are writers who oppose the idea of treating online teaching differently than face-to-face teaching. Proponents of these ideas suggest that there are aspects of andragogy that remain the same regardless of educational modality. Philosophical foundation, educator presence, and clear and frequent communications have all been found to be easily transferable from traditional to online teaching (Anderson, Rourke, Garrison & Anderson, 2003; Gorsky & Blau, 2009; Russo & Benson, 2005). Furthermore, some writers suggest that teaching philosophies

within online education vary as greatly as within traditional education (Green et al., 2010; Xin & Feenberg, 2006). However, constructivism is a common thread within the online andragogy literature due to its goodness-of-fit for both adult learners and the online modality of learning (Barab, Hay, & Duffy, 1998; Bryant & Bates, 2015; Chen & Bennett, 2012; Huang, 2002; Meyers, 2008; Oztok, 2013; Peters, Shmerling, & Karren, 2011).

Constructivism posits that learning occurs when individuals are able to integrate new knowledge with their own experiences and, thereby, make meaning of their learning (Merriam & Bierema, 2013). In this frame of thought, knowledge is not static information waiting to be transferred into the learner; rather, the learner must construct knowledge based on the integration of information and their own experience (Kenner & Weinerman, 2011). Although constructivist writing has contributed to understanding how individuals of all ages learn, the approach is foundational to understanding how adults engage the learning process, as adults engage the learning process with a set of established understandings and experiences, a problem/question orientation to learning, and an internal motivation to learn (Chen, 2014; Kenner & Weinerman, 2011). Each of these realties must be addressed in good andragogical practice.

Constructivist andragogic approaches are particularly well-suited for the online environment because such methods require that a student create a new type of structure for the learning process to occur (Garza-Mitchell, 2009). In other words, constructivist andragogy is a natural fit with the adult learner's desire to integrate new knowledge with their personal experiences, such that one learns through a process of constructing a

conceptual bridge between factual knowledge (from the course instructor) to their own life (previous life experiences, background and preexisting knowledge). Another facet of online learning that is beneficial for adult learners is that the modality places a high level of autonomy on the learner (Paurelle, 2003), so that online students are able to make choices as to when and how they engage the course material, the course instructor, and their peers.

For adult learners who juggle additional responsibilities outside of their studies, the added flexibility of online education is beneficial in striking a balance where all responsibilities can be meet with a minimum of conflict. Furthermore, Paurelle (2003) found that constructivist approaches to online learning were particularly beneficial to learners engaged in context-specific or occupation-based learning, as opposed to learning for learning's sake. Being involved in occupation-specific training provides adult learners the real-world problem-based application they needed to become motivated and remain engaged throughout the learning process. Thus, according to Paurelle, online educators should focus their instruction towards the practical application of knowledge to maximally engage their students. This unique combination of andragogy and constructivism in online environments creates a learning process where adults can engage learning in ways that are both meaningful and congruent with their natural learning styles.

Technological Teaching Tools. The other major components of online instructional design are the technological tools used to facilitate courses. Online technological tools are categorized based on two primary methods of delivery,

synchronous and asynchronous. Synchronous online methods involve educators and students meeting in an online environment at the same time and asynchronous modalities allow educators and learners to engage the online learning environment at different times (Oztok, Zingaro, Brett, & Hewitt, 2013). Asynchronous methods of online instruction have been around much longer and are more widely used in today's online educational environments (Huang & Hsiao, 2012). Synchronous methods are much newer, but are being used at increasing rates due to the advancement and wide availability of synchronous technology (Hrastinski, 2008). Both methods have a strong empirical base and have well-understood strengths and weaknesses.

Synchronous methods are primarily comprised of audio/video-conferencing, presentation, and text-based chat tools (Chen, Ko, Kinshuk, & Lin, 2005; Oztok, Zingaro, Brett, & Hewitt, 2013). These methods allow educators and learners to present information and interact much like they would in a traditional face-to-face classroom. Regrettably, these tools are often unfamiliar to educators (Chen et al., 2005), which means the tools that may provide the most familiar teaching experience are often underutilized by educators new to the online teaching environment. Synchronous tools also provide familiar learning conditions for students who have been involved in traditional education for most of their formal education (Oztok et al., 2013). Synchronous methods have been shown to improve cognitive complexity and group decision-making skills, to foster better understanding of students' learning attitudes, to increase student satisfaction with online courses, to promote social presence among educators and students, and to create the types of spontaneous thinking and challenge that often occur in

the traditional classroom (Chen et al., 2005; Giesbers, Rienties, Tempelaar, & Gijselaers, 2014; Huang & Hsiao, 2012; Oztok et al., 2013). By contrast, synchronous methods are less effective than asynchronous methods in creating opportunities for reflection and in-depth critical thinking (Huang & Hsiao, 2012). Synchronous approaches also are less convenient than asynchronous methods as users must all be present at the same time.

Asynchronous methods comprise a much wider variety of technological tools. Among the most commonly used asynchronous tools in online education are course management systems (CMS)(Thoms et al., 2008). CMSs are typically used for tasks such as content delivery, assignment submission/feedback, and sometimes contain synchronous tools such as audio/video or text-based chats (Woo & Reeves, 2008). CMSs might also contain other asynchronous tools such as blogs, wikis, and group discussion forums. Asynchronous methods characteristically allow for deeper levels of reflection and in-depth critical thinking (Huang & Hsiao, 2012). This is due to synchronous methods requiring immediate engagement and feedback from students, whereas asynchronous methods give students time to employ reflective thinking practices that lead to more in-depth critical thinking before providing responses. Asynchronous methods are also more convenient for educators and learners due to the fact that they allow users to interact at a time and place of their choosing, allowing students to have more control and autonomy in the pacing and sequencing of course material and activities (Clark & Mayer, 2008).

Some newer asynchronous tools have emerged over recent years, such as microblogging and learning community websites. Microblogging is much like traditional

blogging, however constraints are placed on the length of user entries (Hsu & Ching, 2012). Hsu and Ching used microblogging in a graduate design course to allow students to take pictures in their everyday contexts and share their thoughts on the course material. The participants reported positive attitudes toward the microblogging activities as a way to help them apply their coursework to their real-world contexts. Therefore, microblogging is a technological tool that can provide students with the opportunity to demonstrate, and educators with the opportunity to better understand, how learning is being translated from classroom content to real-life experiences.

Learning community websites are separate from CMSs and are often structured much like a social networking website, however the focus is on learning (Thoms et al., 2008). The primary objective of a learning community website is to foster learning through community interaction and sharing, not instruction. Unlike CMSs, where educators typically have control of the online environment, learners can create learning community websites however they wish (Farooq, 2007). A unique benefit of learning community websites is that the users access to the site does not end when a course is concluded, as happens with CMSs. Thus interested students can continue participating in the learning community as long as the exchange of information proves useful. Educators may also continue involvement in the learning community website, although their role might transition from instructor to co-learner.

Knowing the various technological tools and their empirically validated uses in the teaching and learning process is a vital component of developing and implementing effective online education (Oztok, Zingaro, Brett, & Hewitt, 2013). In online teaching,

these tools are the primary means of educators communicating with students, students communicating with each other, and students conveying their experiences of engaging the course material. Clark and Mayer (2008) noted that course factors such as number of students, class composition, students' previous knowledge and experiences, and students' motivation should all be considered when selecting technological tools for online education. It is worth noting that both educator and student comfort levels with technological tools increases with frequency of practice, so an initial learning curve can be expected when encountering new technological tools (Chou, 2001). When an educator is removed from the physical classroom and no longer has the option of standing before students to present content and facilitate class interaction, these technological tools, along with the underlying andragogical approach, come together to form instructional design that shapes the learning experiences of students.

Educator Support

Given the growing adoption and utilization of online education within institutions of higher education, educator support has emerged in the literature as a one of the focal points for understanding how this new modality of education is being facilitated. Many educators that are entering online education have had no formal education or training on how to facilitate online learning (Anderson & Anderson, 2012). Therefore, receiving support as they engage this new form of education is vital as educators develop their online education practice. Support for educators can take many forms, however the two most commonly cited supports are institutional and departmental. The terminology for these two forms of support are often used interchangeably in the literature, nevertheless it

is important to distinguish between each type of support to understand what it looks like within the educational context (Ouellett, 2010).

Institutional. The decision to engage in online higher education often takes place at the institutional level (Fish & Wickersham, 2009), however, once the decision to engage online education has been made, institutional support becomes vital to effectively implement quality online education. Without proper support, online educators may be burdened with logistical and administrative aspects of online education, thus detracting from focusing on teaching. Unfortunately, The American Association of State College and Universities (2006) found that there is a gap between the growing acceptance of and implementation of online higher education and the capacity of higher education institutions to meet the needs of faculty and students. Understanding these needs and how institutions can support educators is fundamental to ensuring its success.

Institutions typically provide two types of online instruction support, professional development and technical training and support. Professional development involves formal training opportunities as were previously discussed in the online teaching preparation section above. These professional development opportunities tend to be geared toward the teaching and learning processes within an online context and the tools that facilitate those processes. Technical support involves the building and maintaining up-to-date technical infrastructure, providing training specific to available technologies, and ongoing technical support. It should be noted that the training specific to available technologies differs from professional development in its focus on how to use particular technologies. Where professional development might focus on online teaching

philosophy or how to use particular tools to facilitate different types of learning, technological training focuses on the functionality of a particular technology, such as a CMS. In other words, professional development focuses on the "why' of the tools and technological training focuses on the "how".

One of the fundamental institutional support issues regarding online education is providing the necessary technical infrastructure to meet the needs of online teachers and learners (Finney, 2004; Orr, Williams, & Pennington, 2009). Schroeder (2001) suggested that institutions should consider building an online educational program much like they would consider building a new physical campus. Institutions must be willing to invest in updated hardware (computers, audio/video equipment, and internet with strong bandwidth) and licensed software (Course Management Systems (CSMs), audio/video editing, audio/video conferencing, cloud-based storage, and data management systems) in order for faculty and students to have the necessary infrastructure to engage in online education. Without the foundation of strong institutional support for online teaching and learning, faculty and students may find the technical infrastructure insufficient for facilitating the online learning process (Dykman & Davis, 2008; Orr, Williams, & Pennington, 2009). Engaging online education without these technical supports in place may be frustrating for educators and students, but worse, it may interrupt and negatively influence the teaching and learning experiences of everyone involved.

Once infrastructure supports are in place, training in the use of available technologies becomes a vital aspect of implementing online education. Among the most important aspects of technology support is providing technical training to faculty and

students before they engage online educational technologies (Christi & Garrote Jurado, 2009; Deggs, Grover, & Kacirek, 2010; Yoo & Huang, 2013). Santilli and Beck (2005) found that in one online graduate program where 47 educators were engaged in online teaching, only 53% received training specific to the available technologies at their institution. That means nearly half of the participants, who were educating individual at the graduate level, were relying solely on informal preparation to understand the variety of available tools and their uses. The lack of training in the basic technical competencies needed to engage the online learning process has been framed as an ethical issue that institutions need to consider if they are implementing online education (Abbass et al., 2011; Rousmaniere et al., 2014; Vaccaro & Lambie, 2007).

In addition to technical training on the front-end of online education, access to ongoing technical support throughout the learning process has been found to be a major contributor to the success of online learning (ADEC, 1999; Reushle & Mitchell, 2009; Yoo & Huang, 2013). For online educators, this ongoing support means quick turn-around on receiving technical assistance when hardware and/or software issues arise during the course implementation (Lindberg & Olofsson, 2009). In the case of online learners, ongoing support entails access to technical support, often remote-access, to aid in navigating CMSs, MSs, file and data transfers, audio/video issues, and online research assistance (Christie & Garrote Jurado, 2009; Payne & Johnson, 2005). Without these proper ongoing technical supports, online educators become encumbered with troubleshooting students', and their own, technical glitches and mishaps, which detract from the teaching and learning that should be the focus of education.

Departmental. In addition to institutional support, departmental support has materialized as an influential factor in educators' experiences of teaching online. The most prominent topics in the literature on departmental support for online teaching are the incentives offered to online educators. Some of the incentives to teach online, such as reaching a non-traditional student population or schedule flexibility, are outside the scope of departmental support (Allen & Seaman, 2007). However, there are several incentives that are within the purview of departmental administration that are specific to online teaching, such as: recognition for tenure and promotion, release time for course development, financial compensation, and retention of intellectual property rights online courses (Herman, 2013).

Institutional and departmental administration of the promotion and tenure process varies, however in regards to support for online educators, both online teaching and the development of new courses, should be included in the promotion and tenure process similar to traditional face-to-face teaching (Fish & Wickersham, 2009; Herman, 2013). Regarding release time for course development, Allen and Seaman (2013) found that 64% of faculty engaged in online teaching experienced online teaching as more time-intensive than traditional face-to-face teaching, and 85% experienced online course development as more time-intensive than traditional course development. In an interesting supplement to this finding, they also reported that among private-for-profit educational institutions, only 24% of faculty thought that online teaching was more time-intensive than traditional teaching. No explanation is provided for this difference in faculty perceptions, however the finding raises questions about the different approaches

public, private non-profit, and private for-profit institutions may take toward online course development and release time.

Financial compensation can take the form of course buy-out for release time or a supplemental stipend or financial payment in addition to an educators' existing financial package. In a survey of over 8,500 faculty members, Allen and Seaman (2008) reported that only 27% reported additional income as a motivator for teaching online. Interestingly, as part of that same survey the researchers indicated that 60% of chief academic officers reported additional income as a motivator for their institution's engagement in providing online education. These results indicate that educators' and institutions' motivations for becoming involved in online education may differ. Regardless, the additional time commitments involved in developing and implementing online education raise the issue of differentiated compensation for online educators.

Retention of intellectual property rights is another incentive and involves the granting of ownership to educators who develop new and innovative online curriculum (Herman, 2013). Most institutions or departments have policies regarding intellectual property rights that extend into the online education realm (Fish & Wickersham, 2009). However, institutions that are utilizing online education should consider how intellectual property rights will be handled for online educators and should formalize these policies to ensure fair and transparent implementation.

Summary

Unless there is a drastic reversal of current trends, online education is here to stay and will continue to have growing influence in the higher education sector. The current

body of online teaching literature puts forward many considerations for both educators and institutions that engage online education. Preparation, both formal and informal, to teach in the online environment has proven to be vital in educators' ability to effectively facilitate online learning. More specifically, educators who are prepared for online instructional design, which combines andragogic approaches and technological teaching tools, can better construct learning environments that lead to the desired learning outcomes. Furthermore, institutions offering online education have demonstrated that support at the institutional and departmental levels are critical factors to consider before and during the online educational process. This information is helpful in understanding of the broader online teaching context and directly translates into the online counselor training, but further exploration of the online counselor training literature will provide information on the context specific online training that takes place in the counseling field.

Online Counselor Training

History and Prevalence of Technology in Counselor Training

The use of computer technology in the counseling profession is not a new trend. The earliest uses of computer technologies in the training of counselors occurred in the mid-1960's. Computer scientists at MIT developed naturalized human language software named ELIZA that closely mimicked the responses of a Rogerian psychotherapist (Weizenbaum, 1965). A human user typed text-based language as if they were talking with a counselor and ELIZA would respond with a reflective statement or question based on keywords from the user's input. Many computer programs, such as ELIZA, have been developed in attempts to see if software driven computer technologies might be able to

provide an adequate substitute for counseling services. Colby, Watt, and Gilbert (1966) developed a computer program that replicated psychoanalytic techniques and Selmi, Klein, Greist, Johnson, and Harris (1982) designed a program that generated responses based on cognitive-behavioral counseling methods. These programs did not gain traction as substitutes for counseling, but they have been used as tools while training counselors in skill development (Phillips, 1983; Wagman & Kerber, 1984).

As the use of computers and computer technologies spread in the 1980's, researchers within the counseling field began writing about the terminology and possible applications of computers within the counseling and counselor education field. One of the first articles to specifically address the use of computers in counselor education provided descriptions of different types of computers and defined commonly used computer terminology (Green, 1984). Alpert, Pulvino, and Lee (1984) provided a descriptive examination of a specific computer program called *The Counselor Accountability System* that provided counselors-in-training an electronically formatted file system to maintain many of the logistical and administrative aspects of their counselor training, such as time logs and session notes. Alpert et al. were among the first researchers to discuss computer technologies being used outside of counseling simulation and examined them as a broader set of tools for counselor education. Harris-Bowlsbey (1984) also looked at the increasing use of technology within counselor training, but took a philosophical view of how the "high tough" (interpersonally/relationally based) field of counseling might integrate the "high tech" trends of technology. Even though Harris-Bowlsbey recognized that incongruence might exist between the interpersonal nature of counseling and

counselor training, he concluded that Counselor Educators must embrace the utilization of technology to stay relevant in an evolving educational landscape.

Lambert (1988) also provided a descriptive summation of the available computer technologies and suggested how they might be used within the counselor education field. He drew particular attention to the new video technologies that were gradually becoming accessible to educators and suggested that new forms of technology would progressively make their way into counselor education. Lambert also proposed that the counseling profession was slower to adopt new technologies than other professions. This recognition that the counseling profession was slow in adopting and integrating new forms of technology was echoed in more recent literature (Conn, Roberts, & Powell, 2009; Rousmaniere, Abbass, & Frederickson, 2014). Lundberg (2000) suggested that slow adoption rates may be due to what is presumed to be an incongruence between the impersonal nature of computer technologies and the relational communicative nature of counseling and counselor training. Lundberg went on to propose that as computer technologies move closer to replicating in-person interactions, the counseling profession might utilize these technologies at higher rates.

The rapid growth of the internet and more accessible computer technologies in the 1990's led to wider adoption and use of computer technologies within counselor education (Lundberg, 2000; Wantz et al., 2003). To better understand how computer technologies were being utilized in the counselor education field, in 2003 Wantz et al. (2003) conducted a survey of all CACREP accredited programs inquiring about their use of online technologies in their curriculum. One hundred and twenty-seven programs

responded (31% response rate) to the survey. Forty-two percent of participants indicated that some form of distance education was being used as a method of instruction in their program. Fifty-three percent of the respondents reported that no plans existed to incorporate online technologies into their curriculum. Eleven participating programs offered one or more courses completely online.

Wantz et al.'s (2003) survey also collected data on what forms of technologies were in use by the participating programs. Course management systems (CMSs) were the most frequently reported technologies, which in not surprising given that CMSs are the main portal for accessing online curriculum. Forty-two percent of the participating programs reported that the use of online learning technologies had increased the quality of instruction at their institution and 48% reported that the use of online technologies had no impact on the quality of their instruction. These results suggest that although many counselor education programs had not utilized online technologies at that time, the majority of the programs that did employ these technologies found them to maintain or increase the quality of instruction in their curricula.

Unfortunately, there is no current data on the utilization or prevalence of online counselor training. However, there are currently 12 online CACREP accredited counseling education programs (CACREP, 2015). CACREP considers a program to be online if 50% or more of the program is conducted utilizing an online format. Of these 12 online programs, nine offer master's degrees in Clinical Mental Health Counseling, eight offer master's degrees in School Counseling, three offer master's degrees in Marriage and Family Counseling, one offers a master's degree in Career Counseling, and three

offer doctoral degrees in Counselor Education. Even though these numbers are not wholly representative of the full spectrum of online teaching in the Counselor Education field, they do demonstrate, at least partially, the rapid growth from 11 programs offering one or more courses in 2003 (Wantz et al., 2003) to 12 programs offering online degrees today.

To address the growth in technology use and online counselor education the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES) published *Guidelines for Online Instruction* (1999) and *Technical Competencies for Counselor Education Students: Recommended Guidelines for Program Development* (1999). The *Guidelines for Online Instruction* (ACES, 1999) focused on the use of online technologies in the training of counselors and included 27 guidelines divided among six categories: course quality, course/content objectives, instructional support, faculty qualifications, instructor/course evaluation, and technological standards. The *Technical Competencies for Counselor Education Students: Recommended Guidelines for Program Development* (1999) included a set of 12 competencies that covered accessing and utilizing various computer technologies and understanding the ethical and legal implications of using technology within counselor education. Both of these sets of guidelines were developed with the recommendation that they be continuously updated to reflect the ongoing development of computer technologies.

ACES updated the *Technical Competencies for Counselor Education Students: Recommended Guidelines for Program Development* in 2007. This updated document included a recommendation that Counselor Educators maintain "competence in the

application of computer and related technology to assess the appropriateness of technology applications to teaching, practice, and research" (ACES, 2007). This recommendation indicates that Counselor Educators must be competent in their knowledge of evolving technologies and how they can be utilized in the preparation of counselors. Unfortunately, both the *Technical Competencies for Counselor Educators Students: Recommended Guidelines for Program Development* and the *Guidelines for Online Instruction* are noticeably absent from the counselor education literature and appear to have remained largely conceptual in nature.

CACREP has also recognized the growing influence of online education in the upcoming *2016 CACREP Standards*. In their standards specific to doctoral-level Counselor Educator preparation, the standards state that Counselor Educators need knowledge of "effective approaches for online instruction". This inclusion goes beyond a recommendation and solidifies the need to understand the use of technology in preparing counselors as a requirement for Counselor Educators going forward. These new standards reinforce the need to better understand the process Counselor Educators experience in preparing to train counselors online. Although professional counseling organizations have recognized the growing influence of online technologies, the body of research on online counselor training remains sparse.

Online Counselor Training

Counselor Educators are tasked with facilitating the development of counselors-in-training in a multitude of critical areas. These areas include the development of empathy, compassion, open-mindedness, self-awareness, comfort with ambiguity,

openness to others' worldviews and experiences, and the capacity to work with individuals who are emotionally distraught (Arredeondo & Arciniega, 2001; Corey, Corey, & Callanan, 1993; McAuliffe & Eriksen, 2000). Additionally, Counselor Educators facilitate counselors-in-training development of cognitive complexity, reflective practice, and the counseling skills necessary to facilitate the helping relationship (Corey et al, 1993; Giovannelli, 2003; Ivey, 1994). Unfortunately, there has been limited investigation into how Counselor Educators are preparing and facilitating these types of learning experiences in online environments.

The majority of literature on online counselor training has been narrowly focused, examining outcomes on specific skill development or competencies. One of the first investigations into online technologies in counselor training was conducted at a time when the use of the internet was gaining momentum in higher education. Lundberg (2000) researched counselors-in-training to see if their on-line computer proficiency and perceived value of computer technology in research changed with the introduction of three online exercises into a counselor education course in human development. The three online exercises included: 1) Establishing an email account with the university, 2) Conducting an internet search of counseling profession websites and writing a reflection paper on the experience, and 3) Conducting an internet search on a specific model of moral development and emailing a summary paper to the instructor.

A total of 56 students participated in Lundberg's (2000) study. The participants completed a researcher-developed survey, which measured self-rated online computer proficiency on a 10-point Likert scale, at the beginning and the completion of the course.

Participants also completed a survey at the end of the course rating their perceived value of both traditional research methods and online research methods on a 10-point Likert scale. Lundberg found a significant difference in students' online computer proficiency, with students rating themselves an average of 3 points higher on the Likert-scale after completing the course. Students also reported an overall higher preference for online research methods compared to traditional research methods This study is now outdated and the technologies Lundberg studied (email & internet searches) are now commonly used in counselor training. However, this study was significant in being one of the first demonstrations of counselor educators experimenting with online technologies in the training of counselors.

In another examination of counseling students' perception of online technologies, Ekong (2006) conducted a quantitative study of 28 online graduate counseling students in Canada to investigate the factors students deemed important in their educational experience. The participants filled out a 10 item, five-point Likert scale questionnaire developed by the researcher. The factors considered 'extremely important' by the participants were: instructor interaction style, discussion participation, and regularity of feedback. Factors that were deemed 'important' were: CAAP format (online delivery system), clarity of expectations, course delivery style, and student health and stress management. The factors that students deemed important in this study are factors that are important in any mode of teaching and learning. Unfortunately, the researcher in this study did not investigate why or if these factors are particularly important in the online modality. Interestingly, Ekong found that students did not rate technical competency as

an important factor in their educational experience. This is incongruent with the broader literature that suggests that technical training and competency is a critical aspect of online teaching and learning.

The development of cultural competency among counselors-in-training is another area of technology enhanced learning that has received attention by researchers. Ilieva and Erguner-Tekinalp (2012) conducted a mixed-methods study in which an online wiki was employed to investigate its impact on students' cultural competency development in a traditional course in multicultural counseling. The primary purpose of the wiki was to assist students' engagement in cultural empathetic understanding between class meetings. The researchers used four instruments to survey 19 graduate students at the end of the course. A researcher-developed fourteen-item qualitative survey was utilized to explore students' experiences of using the wiki. Three quantitative questionnaires were combined to investigate students' internet use (time and purpose) and technological proficiencies and efficacy.

The main qualitative findings of Ilieva and Erguner-Tekinalp's (2012) study were that students appreciated the convenience, time for reflection, and additional personal experiences shared by peers that the wiki allowed. Students also reported that they felt more comfortable sharing their opinions and personal experience in the online format, even though the posts were not anonymous Very few of the students involved in the study reported negative experiences of using the wiki, but four participants did disclose that they would prefer face-to-face discussion because they felt disconnected using an electronic medium of communication. In the quantitative data that was gathered, students

reported rated their computer proficiency as high and indicated an openness to learning new technologies as part of their learning experiences. Ilieva and Erguner-Tekinalp's findings are interesting, but they did not seem to measure what was stated as the intended purpose of the study, the impact of using a wiki on cultural competency development. Their study appears to be more of an exploratory inquiry into students' experiences of using a wiki, and although students identified aspects of the wiki they found helpful, this didn't necessarily measure the impact the wiki had on the students' cultural competency development.

As evidenced by its limited quantity and scope, the empirical research on teaching and learning in online counselor training is lagging far behind its implementation. The research that has been conducted has been student outcome focused and has examined narrow aspects of counselor development. The few initial findings hint that the online medium can be effectively used in counselor training, but they have typically focused on online technologies as tools for particular aspects of learning and have neglected to develop a broader understanding of how this modality of teaching and learning is being utilized by counselor educators. Research exploring aspects of counselor educators' experiences in engaging online counselor training is completely absent. Although research into the various aspects of teaching and learning in online counselor training is sparse, there is a larger pocket of research around the use of technology in supervision.

Online Supervision. Clinical Supervision if an area of online counselor training that has received more extensive research. The benefits of online supervision are well documented and relatively uniform throughout the research in this area. Rousmaniere,

Abbass, and Frederickson (2014) stated that greater access to qualified clinical supervisors, more productive supervision sessions, and more efficient use of supervisees' time are potential benefits of utilizing online clinical supervision. Other researchers have identified potential benefits to online clinical supervision, including: greater access to supervisors for international students and students living in rural areas, increased availability and diversity of supervisors, greater cost-effectiveness for educational institutions, and greater diversity of counseling trainees due to increased accessibility to the supervision process (Abbass et al., 2011; Chapman, Baker, Nassar-McMillan, & Gerler, 2011; Vaccaro & Lambie, 2007). As evidenced by these many benefits, online supervision appears to have much to offer the field of counseling as a cost-effective and practical way to expand the reach of quality supervision. However, this segment of the online counselor training literature has limitations that support a more in-depth examination into how it is being facilitated by counselor educators.

Clinical supervision delivered online has limitations which are evident in the research literature. One drawback of online supervision is the decreased ability to recognize non-verbal communication between the supervisor and supervisee (Coker, Jones, Staples, & Harbach, 2002; Sorlie, Gammon, Bergvik, & Sexton, 1999). Sorlie et al. (1999) conducted one of the first studies to examine video-based supervision and their study yielded an interesting mix of results. They utilized a mixed-methods design and compared traditional face-to-face supervision to video-based supervision among six supervisees and two supervisors. Ten supervision sessions were conducted on a rotating ABAB format, with alternating face-to-face and video-based modalities. The supervisees

and supervisors both completed a researcher-developed 15-item Likert-scale quantitative survey that measured various aspects of supervision, such as communication, contact, alliance, and disturbances in the supervisory relationship. Qualitative interviews were conducted at the end of the study to gain depth of understanding regarding the quantitative results.

Sorlie et al. (1999) found no significant differences in any of the supervision aspects measured for supervisors. Thus supervisors appeared to have very similar experiences between the video-based and face-to-face supervision modalities. The supervisors had an average rating of the supervisory alliance that was slightly higher than the supervisee's average rating (18.8 vs. 15.1 on a 24-point scale), but the difference was not significant. The supervisees rated having significantly more disturbances when utilizing the video-based compared to the face-to-face supervision format. The qualitative results indicated that the disturbances were triggered by students' anxieties and discomfort with technology, reduced eye contact and less nuanced verbal ques, and an increased reliance on verbal ques for communication. Interestingly, the supervisees reported that these factors diminished over the duration of the study, suggesting that developing a comfort level with the video-based modality improved the occurrence of disturbances.

Sorlie et al.'s results indicated that video-based supervision closely resembled face-to-face supervision. However, this study focused solely on a comparison of video-based and face-to-face supervision and utilized a small sample size which had pre-established supervisory relationships before utilizing the video-based supervision.

Therefore, the generalizability of the results to larger population of supervisors and supervisees utilizing video-based supervision is questionable. Recognizing the limitations of their study, Sorlie et al. suggested that further investigation into supervisors' approaches, pedagogically and technically, is needed to better understand this new modality of supervision.

In another comparative study, Conn, Roberts, and Powell (2009) compared face-to-face clinical supervision with a hybrid model (both face to face and online video supervision) with 76 master's level counseling students enrolled in their first semester of internship. Of the participants, 41 selected to take part in the hybrid model and 36 students selected to participate in a face-to-face supervision group. The researchers utilized three different supervision assessments for comparison: *Supervisory Working Alliance Inventory: Trainee Form, Supervision Questionnaire,* and *Web-based Distance Group Satisfaction Survey*. The hybrid model of supervision utilized both synchronous chat-based and face-to-face techniques, as students in the group met online 10 times throughout the semester and met in person 5 times. The face-to-face group met in person for all 15 supervision meetings. Results indicated that there were no differences in perceived quality of supervision between the two groups. Additionally, the hybrid supervision group reported more positive attitudes toward the use of technology in counselor training following their supervision experience.

Coker et al. (2001) also compared the effectiveness of traditional face-to-face clinical supervision to an online supervision modality. The researchers investigated how five practicum students experienced the use of a text-based online program for clinical

supervision and if their experience differed significantly compared to face-to-face supervision. The group of practicum students engaged in five face-to-face supervision sessions and five online supervision sessions over a 10-week period. Students rated the online supervision sessions as similar in quality to the face-to-face supervision sessions, although the power for this comparison was quite low due to the small sample. The researchers reported that the findings are preliminary evidence that online supervision may be an effective supervision modality, however the low sample size undermines the strength of this claim.

Chapman et al. (2011), like Conn, Robert, and Powell (2009), used a chat-based distance clinical supervision model with five supervisees engaged in 14 supervision sessions. Unlike Conn, Robert, and Powell (2009), Chapman et al. (2011) focused on five supervisees' experiences engaged in online supervision, tracking each student's self-report each week throughout the 15-week semester. For the first two supervision sessions, students met with the supervisor face-to-face and for the remaining sessions met with the supervisor and other supervisees solely through an online format for 1 hour of individual supervision and 2 hours of weekly group supervision. Supervisor ratings of the supervisees' counseling competence, as measured by the Interview Rating Scale (IRS), increased steadily from week 3 to week 14, suggesting steady improvement throughout the semester. In addition, the supervisees' evaluation of their self-efficacy, as measured by the Counselor Self-Efficacy Scale (CSES) also increased, although some more drastically than others.

Perry (2012) conducted a qualitative study of online clinical supervision that looked specifically at levels of professional identity development. The sample consisted of nine master's students and seven university supervisors. All university supervision was conducted online and site supervision was conducted using a traditional face-to-face modality. Qualitative phone interviews were conducted with the supervisees and supervisors to explore the professional identity development of the students. The results of the interviews suggested that the online supervision is an effective modality in terms of developing professional identity in counselors-in-training.

Rousmaniere and Frederickson (2013) investigated the effectiveness of online clinical supervision was examined through qualitative methodology to explore the use of online live one-way mirror supervision. The sample was limited to one supervisor and one supervisee's use of online live one-way mirror supervision across nine clients for a total of 30 sessions. All nine clients reported satisfaction with the clinical services they received and five clients reported that the sessions in which live supervision was used were more intense and transformative than session without live supervision. Five of the clients reported that the use of technology within the counseling sessions was not a distraction. The supervisor and supervisee reported experiencing a closer supervisory relationship during the live supervision process than during their post-session supervision. This preliminary study indicates that online live one-way mirror clinical supervision may be an effective modality and could open possibilities for live supervision where geographical or logistical barriers might have previously prevented this possibility.

The ethical considerations of online supervision have also been addressed in the literature. Researchers in this area have explored the ethical implications of online supervision from a conceptual stance and there have been no empirical investigations regarding these ethical issues. Confidentiality is mentioned by several researchers as the most prominent ethical consideration in online supervision (Abbass et al., 2011; Rousmaniere et al., 2014; Vaccaro & Lambie, 2007). Regarding confidentiality, Vaccaro and Lambie (2007) recommended that supervisors and supervisees should take precautions to ensure that any identifying client information is transferred through Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) compliant communication modalities. They also suggest that de-identifying client information by using initials or encryption software are additional steps that can be taken to ensure client confidentiality. Abbass et al. (2011) provided a practical guide to engaging in online supervision that included checking file-sharing, emailing, and videoconferencing products to ensure HIPAA compliance as a necessary best-practice for online supervision.

Legal liability is another important consideration for those engaging in online clinical supervision (Vaccaro & Lambie, 2007). Vaccaro and Lambie (2007) recommended that institutions and individual supervisors should check their liability coverage to make sure they are covered in providing online supervision. They went on to say that legal counsel around liability coverage might be needed if coverage requirements are unclear. Supervisors and supervisees using online supervision should also ensure that they have the technical competencies required to effectively engage in online supervision (Abbass et al., 2011; Rousmaniere et al., 2014). Abbass et al. (2011) indicated that

providing technical training might be necessary for those who are unfamiliar with the technologies used in online supervision. They recommended that this training should take place before online supervision actually begins to be sure that the needs of the client and supervisee are not compromised by technical challenges. Vaccaro and Lambie (2007) pointed out that there are no technology specific ethical guidelines for online supervision, therefore educational institutions and supervision practitioners should develop their own set of policies and procedures around the ethical considerations of online supervision.

The research on online counselor training, although limited in scope and quantity, leads to the preliminary conclusion that this growing modality of counselor training may effectively facilitate different aspects of counselor development. A major limitation in the current body of literature in the area is the glaring omission of any research into how Counselor Educators are preparing, developing, and implementing this new form of counselor training. The broader body of research on online education indicates that these are vital aspects of online higher education and warrant investigation.

Preparing to Train Counselors Online

Counselor Educators receive both formal and informal training as doctoral students and as practicing counselor educators to facilitate educational experiences where students learn to integrate content through personal reflection, skill development and demonstration, and clicnial supervision, (Coursol & Lewis, 2004; Morrissettee & Gadbois, 2006). Not surprisingly, the limited research on instructional skill development among Counselor Education has focused on traditional forms of counselor training (e.g., face-to-face) and has been limited to investigating preparation at the doctoral level. To

date, no research has occurred that investigates how Counselor Educators are prepared, either formally or informally, to provide counselor training in the online environment.

Although no researchers have examined counselor educator preparation for training counselors in the online environment, a few researchers have investigated the broader teaching preparation of counselor educators. In a dissertation study of 193 counselor education doctoral students and recent graduates from CACREP accredited programs, Tollerud (1990) explored several variables associated with teaching skill acquisition. Tollerud found that there was a statistically significant association between high self-efficacy levels and both doctoral and post-doctoral teaching experiences. Participants who exhibited the highest self-efficacy had taught at least three to five courses during their doctoral studies or post-graduation. Interestingly, Tollerud found that no significant difference in self-efficacy based on the completion of formal coursework on teaching. In terms of teaching self-efficacy, Tollerud's study indicates that experience is more influential that formal training, therefore further investigation is needed to explore the experiences of Counselor Educators who are actively teaching.

Carter et al. (1994) surveyed 84 counselor educators who had teaching experiences ranging from 4 to 40 years and taught, on average, three courses per semester. The participants were asked to rate their doctoral preparation for teaching and 79% of participants reported being "fairly well" or "very well" prepared. Twenty percent of participants reported being "somewhat" or "not at all" prepared to teach based on their doctoral education. Only nine percent of participants said that formal coursework in teaching was required in their doctoral training and 10% had acquired teaching

experiences through a required internship as part of their program of study. Based on these findings, Carter et al. recommended that doctoral programs consider more formal coursework in which students study teaching pedagogy and gain experiences teaching while under the supervision of Counselor Education faculty members. Unfortunately, Carter et al. did not survey participants regarding training or education received regarding teaching following the completion of their doctoral studies; therefore, much of educator preparation, which takes place as educators engage teaching over time, was left unexplored. This study is also outdated at this point and did not include any online-specific preparation.

In a more recent dissertation study, Hall (2007) investigated various areas of counselor educators' perceptions of their doctoral preparation to teach. Hall surveyed 202 participants using a 58-item researcher-developed Likert scale survey regarding the effectiveness of their doctoral preparation for teaching practice. Participants were also completed a qualitative questionnaire related to improvements doctoral training programs could include to enhance teaching preparation. Gaining experience teaching a full course from beginning to end was rated as the most effective preparation for teaching; followed by observation and feedback from faculty members, supervised teaching, mentored teaching, and seminar courses on teaching. Formal coursework on college teaching was the lowest rated form of preparation. Themes emerging from the qualitative portion of the survey that could enhance instructional training included faculty mentoring, practicum teaching, additional coursework on teaching, and observation and feedback from faculty.

The research conducted by Tollerud (1990), Carter et al. (1994), and Hall (2007) highlights the need for teaching preparation in the counselor education field. However, these studies lacked an investigation into the contextually specific training of Counselor Educators to teach in the online environment. This research is also limited by its focus on preparation for teaching in counselor education that occurred during doctoral studies. Although preparation while a doctoral student is a vital part of one's preparation to train counselors, the broader literature related to online higher education suggests that significant learning, both formal and informal, occurs while educators are actively teaching in the online environment. The current study aims to address this gap in literature by investigating the personal experiences of Counselor Educators as they prepare for, develop, and implement online counselor training.

Summary

Distance education has evolved over the past 175 years from correspondence education by mail to live, face-to-face communication through the internet. Currently, online higher education is growing at higher rates than any other form of education (Allen & Seaman, 2015). Due to this rapid growth, researchers have investigated many factors that influence educators' ability to effectively facilitate learning in the online environment. What has emerged from these investigations is a complexity of issues that combine to shape the experiences of educators, and thus students, engaged in online higher education.

Educators are prepared to facilitate online education through two forms, formal and informal training. Formal training is developed and facilitated by an outside entity,

such as university or professional organization, and informal training encompasses all other forms of training that educators might receive, such as self-directed learning and mentoring. The online higher education literature indicates that educators need preparation in the instructional design process in order to facilitate effective learning experiences for students. The instructional design process integrates andragogy and available technologies to construct courses that target specified type of students learning and communication.

The literature related to online education suggests that support for educators who teach online is critical for success. Because online education is a relatively new approach to higher education, many educators need support at the institution and departmental levels to effectively develop and implement learning experiences online. Without these supports, online educators likely lack the resources, training, or incentives to engage the evolving online education modality.

The field of Counselor Education appears to be slower than other disciplines in adopting and investigating online education. The limited research into online counselor training has largely been focused on student outcomes, examining specific skill or competency development. This line of research is beginning to suggest that training counselors in the online environment can be done effectively, however the current state of the literature provides only a narrow understanding of how Counselor Educators are preparing, developing, and implementing counselor training in online environments. The current study aims to expand understanding of online counselor training by exploring the experiences of Counselor Educators currently engaged in online counselor training. Due

to the limited understanding of online counselor training, the broader online education literature was used to give direction for areas of exploration. The results of the current study will add to our understanding of online counselor training, specifically in terms of the challenges and successes current Counselor Educators experience and will provide much needed direction for future research. The following chapter will describe the methodology and procedures that will be utilized to execute this study.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

As indicated in Chapter I, the purpose of the current study was to explore the experiences of Counselor Educators who develop and deliver online training in CACREP-accredited counselor training programs. A review of the literature related to online education and online counselor training was presented in Chapter II to provide context for the current study. The purpose of this chapter is to provide an in-depth overview of the research methods that were used to conduct the study, including the theory and process of consensual qualitative research (CQR), instrumentation, participants, and results of the pilot study.

Consensual Qualitative Research (CQR)

The current research study utilizes consensual qualitative research (CQR) (Hill et al., 1997; Hill 2012). Chapters I and II explored the factors that underlie the need for the current study. In summary, the studies of have examined narrow aspects of online counselor training, but have failed to explore the broader aspects of what the online counselor training experience is like for those responsible for developing and delivering the training. Because counselor educators have a broad perspective of how courses are developed, implemented, and received by students, an exploration of their experiences is needed. The CQR method was chosen because it allows individuals immersed in a phenomenon to give in-depth and rich descriptions of their experiences. CQR provides a

rigorous examination of these experiences by using the consensus process of the research team to analyze the key themes from the participants' experiences. The results will provide direction for future research into online counselor training and the challenges that counselors educators are experiencing in providing this growing modality of counselor training. Implications for future research, practice, and theory development will be stated in Chapter V of this study. The theoretical foundations of CQR, the research process, and data analysis are described below.

Theoretical Foundations

Consensual Qualitative Research (CQR) is an exploratory qualitative methodology that was first introduced by Hill, Thompson, and Williams (1997). It was developed when Hill et al. (1997) saw a need for a qualitative methodology that would provide a more rigorous process for exploring phenomena within the counseling field. CQR utilizes a small, but homogeneous sample, a research team, and an iterative consensus process to analyze the data and identify domains and themes within participants' experiences of a phenomenon. In developing CQR, Hill et al. (1997) pulled from multiple qualitative methodologies, including grounded theory, phenomenology, comprehensive process analysis (CPA), and feminist theories. Grounded theory informs CQR because of its focus on exploring a system of related constructs about a particular phenomenon. From phenomenology, CQR stresses the development of knowledge as coming from a deep exploration into the experiences of those actively experiencing a phenomenon. CQR uses a sequential framework for data analysis and the interpretation of meanings that is drawn from CPA. Lastly, CQR draws from feminist theories'

emphasis on power sharing and collaboration within the research process. These theoretical foundations come together in CQR to allow data to emerge from participants' experiences of a phenomenon using a collaborative consensus process that distributes power and reduces bias.

CQR Research Process

The CQR methodology posits participants as experts of their own experiences of a phenomenon (Hill et al.,1997). A research team of three to five researchers is used in interpreting the data from participants to reduce the bias of any one researcher (Hill et al., 2005). CQR places critical importance on the relationships among participants and research team members. The relationship between participant and researcher allows participants to openly share the depths of their experience (Hill, 2012). Hill et al. (2005) found that having a supportive and inquisitive researcher helped participants delve deep into their experiences. The relationships among research team members allow for open disclosure of data interpretation and agreement or disagreement among group members about the various interpretations, which is vital in the consensus process (Hill et al., 2005).

Once a research team is assembled, Hill et al. (1997) recommended that all team members and auditors be trained in the CQR methodology using their first article that described the CQR methodology (Hill et al., 1997) and their follow-up article that provided an update to CQR methodology (Hill et al., 2005). Prior to analyzing data, Hill et al. (1997) recommended that the research team engage a bracketing process in which each team member discusses their experiences and perceptions of the phenomenon being

studied. The bracketing process is intended to help team members identify and set aside their subjective biases while engaged in data analysis (Hill et al., 1997). Hill et al. (2005) recommended the use of an external auditor to provide detailed feedback on each step of the data analysis process and make recommendations to the research team. Hill et al. (2005) recommended that the external auditor match the research team's process of attending to focused editorial work at the beginning and moving to more "big picture" thinking in the latter phases of the data analysis.

The data analysis process in CQR involves three primary steps: 1) identification and coding of domains, 2) identification of core ideas by summarizing the content within each domain, and 3) cross-analyzing the data to identify patterns or themes across cases (Hill et al., 1997). Cases are reviewed one at a time by the research team and a consensus process takes place at each of the three steps of data analysis (Hill et al., 1997). Hill et al. (2005) also recommended that the external auditor review the research team's findings at each step in the data analysis process.

Domains

The first step in the data analysis process is identifying and coding domains (Hill et al., 1997). Hill et al.'s (2005) recommended beginning the data analysis process without a "start list" of code domains. However, the research team should acknowledge that the interview questions developed for exploration of participants' experience might inherently suggest domains based on the information they are intended to gather. Each research team member reviews each case and group all data into various domains, or topic areas (Hill; 2012). Once each research team member has coded the domains in the

data, the research team meets and engages a consensus process until all team members agree on the decided domains (Hill et al., 1997). Domains might change as new data is introduced (Hill et al., 1997).

Core Ideas

The second step in the data analysis process is determining the core ideas within the identified domains (Hill et al., 1997). These core ideas are a summation of what the participant has said within a given domain (Hill et al., 1997). Researchers should remain as close as possible to the data and not provide interpretations of meanings when developing the core ideas (Hill et al., 2005). The aim of developing the core ideas is to distill what the participants actually said in the interviews into a concise and clear summation that captures the essence of what was said for a given domain. Once each research team member has developed core ideas independently, the team engages in a discussion until consensus is reached on the core ideas presented in the data. The external auditor is then given a copy of the consensus core ideas and domains to check that: 1) the raw data is within the correct domain, 2) all the information within each domain has been pulled out, and 3) the core ideas are articulated concisely and are reflective of the raw data (Hill et al., 1997). The auditor then provides feedback to the research team, who choose whether to accept or reject the auditor's recommendations.

Cross-analysis

The third and final step in the data analysis process is to cross-analyze the data among all cases in the study (Hill et al., 1997). The research team analyzes all of the core ideas developed from the data and looks for patterns or themes that develop across cases

(Hill et al., 1997). The patterns and themes should emerge directly from the data and should not be based on preconceived ideas of the research team members or the extant literature (Hill et al., 1997). The research team comes to a consensus on the themes and the wording used to describe each theme (Hill et al., 1997). Hill et al. (2005) recommended that an auditor provide feedback matching the research teams process of attending to focused editorial work at the beginning and moving to more "big picture" thinking in the latter phases of the data analysis. Once the research team reaches consensus based on the auditor's cross-analysis feedback, Hill et al. (1997) suggested that frequency labels then be applied to each theme based on how often they appear across cases. The following frequency labels will be used based on Hill et al.'s (2005) revised recommendations:

Table 1

Frequency Label

Frequency Label	**Theme Prevalence**
General	Appears in all or all but one of the cases
Typical	Appears in a least half of cases
Variant	Appears in at least two cases, but less than half of cases
Rare	Appears in only one case

In presenting the CQR process, Hill et al. (1997) recommended that a stability check should be conducted after the domains and core ideas are developed. This stability

check served as a measure of data saturation, or the point where new data is no longer altering the findings of a study (Hill et al., 1997). They recommended that one or two cases be withheld from the cross-analysis and then used to check whether the frequency labels from the remaining cases were accurately reflected in the withheld cases (Hill et al., 1997). In their corpus study, Hill et al. (2005) found that stability checks using the CQR methodology provided little to no benefit in the 15 studies they reviewed. Thus, Hill et al. (2005) concluded that conducting a stability check as part of the CQR process is unnecessary.

Results Evaluation in CQR

Hill et al. (1997) recognized the need for a rigorous method of evaluating qualitative results and provided a six-criteria outline for CQR results evaluation. They recommended that the first three criteria should always be reported in a study, and the remaining three criteria are optional, but should at least be mentioned in the limitations if they are not met in the study (Hill et al., 1997). The first three criteria that should always be mentioned are trustworthiness of the method, coherence of the results, and representativeness to the sample (Hill et al., 1997, p. 556). The remaining criteria are testimonial validity, applicability of the results, and replication across the samples (Hill et al., 1997, p.556).

Trustworthiness of the method is demonstrated by providing evidence that the research methods used throughout a study can be trusted (Hill et al., 1997). In CQR, trustworthiness is established by careful monitoring every step of the research process, from developing the research questions to analyzing the data (Hill et al., 1997). The

researcher should be able to demonstrate that the questions asked were adequate for exploring the research topic, the interviews were conducted consistently, and the interviewer probed deeply enough to gather rich data from participants (Hill et al., 1997). Hill et al. (1997) stated that the research team is essentially serving as an instrument for data measurement in the CQR process; thus, they should be disciplined in adhering to the CQR procedures. The consensus process among the research team should be described to enhance the trustworthiness of the data analysis process (Hill et al., 1997). Trustworthiness extends to the auditing process and the decisions that the research team makes based on the auditor's feedback.

The second criteria for evaluating CQR results is coherence of the results (Hill et al., 1997). Results of the CQR data analysis should answer the research questions and make sense to an outside reader based on the phenomenon being described (Hill et al., 1997). Triangulation is a method that is often used to strengthen coherence of results, but Hill et al. (1997) stated that it is not required or feasible for every study to triangulate data from multiple sources. Hill et al.'s (1997) third criteria is the representativeness of the results to the sample. Researchers using the CQR methodology aim to randomly choose participants that meet the criteria for the phenomenon being studied, but they do not claim that the results of a CQR study are representative of the target population (Hill et al., 1997). The primary method of monitoring the representativeness of the results to the sample in CQR is reporting the frequency labels of the resulting themes.

The next three criteria were cited as advantageous, but not essential for evaluating CQR results (Hill et al., 1997). Testimonial validity is the fourth criteria suggested by

Hill et al. (1997). Testimonial validity involves sending the analyzed data back to participants to verify that the data analysis accurately reflects their experiences (Hill et al., 1997). The fifth criteria for enhancing trustworthiness is the applicability of the results and is essentially asking how practical are the results to actual practice (Hill et al., 1997). Hill et al.'s (1997) final criteria is replication of results across studies. They suggested two different methods of replicating results across studies: 1) A separate research team can analyze the same data from the initial study, or 2) a new set of data using the same questions and process of data analysis can be analyzed and compared to the initial study. The logistical feasibility of replicating a study and the lack of a clear method of comparing results from multiple studies were cited as barriers in putting this final method of evaluating CQR results into practice (Hill et al., 1997).

Research Questions

The purpose of the current study is to explore the experiences of Counselor Educators who develop and deliver online counselor training. There is one primary research question and three sub-questions. The research questions, presented in Chapter I, are below:

What are the experiences of Counselor Educators who develop and deliver online counselor training?

a. How do Counselor Educators describe their experiences of translating their teaching philosophy and practice into the online environment?
b. How do Counselor Educators describe the successes and challenges they have experienced in developing and delivering online counselor training?

c. How do Counselor Educators describe their experiences of support in developing and delivering online counselor training?

Pilot Study

Hill et al. (1997) recommended that interview questions should be piloted with several individuals similar to the target participant group. Given that subjects in the current study were Counselor Educators who train counselors online, a focus group, consisting of three counselor educators, was conducted as a pilot study prior to the main study. The pilot study was conducted with a faculty-panel for the purpose of attaining feedback on the proposed interview process and questions. Pilot study participants provided feedback on the logistical feasibility of the study procedures, the structure and sequencing of the interview questions, and the content validity of the interview questions. One focus group interview was conducted to meet these goals.

Sampling

Convenience sampling was utilized to obtain participants for the pilot study. An email was sent to the department chair of a counselor-training program that offers online counselor training. The department chair gave consent to recruit counselor educators within the department. An email was then sent to all faculty members in the department with a description of the pilot study and the primary researcher's contact information for voluntary participation. Three faculty members responded to the recruitment email and all three participated in the pilot study. The three faculty members met the participant criteria for the full study (i.e., active involvement in developing and delivering online

counselor training), which is congruent with CQR methodology where pilot study participants reflect the target population of the full study (Hill et at., 1997).

Procedures

Prior to commencement of the pilot study, the primary researcher received notice from the Office of Research Integrity that the pilot study did not constitute human subjects research and did not require IRB approval. The primary researcher and the three participants coordinated a meeting date, time, and location through email. Participants agreed to a one-hour focus group meeting. All participants were emailed the full study Informed Consent (see Appendix B) and interview questions (see Appendix C). Each participant was asked to read through the study procedures and interview questions as if they were participating in the study and provide feedback during the focus group. The primary researcher served as the focus group moderator and began the process with participant introductions. The primary researcher provided a brief description of the online counselor training literature to provide context for the study, then participants were invited to provide feedback on the recruitment and interview procedures. Participants then provided feedback on the interview questions, moving sequentially through the interview.

Initial Interview Questions

Initial interview questions were developed by the primary researcher in consultation with a faculty member in the Department of Counseling and Educational Development who is an experienced researcher and serves on the primary researcher's dissertation committee. The interview questions reflected key aspects of the online

teaching experience that are supported in the broader online teaching literature, but remain unexplored in online counselor training. Initial interview questions and can be found in Appendix C.

Results

Three counselor educators, two females and one male, participated in the pilot study focus group interview. Each participant met the inclusion criteria for the full study, meaning they all had doctoral degrees in counselor education and were currently engaged in online counselor training. Furthermore, all participants had at least two-years of experience in providing online counselor training. One of participants volunteered his office as a location to conduct the pilot study focus group, which was anticipated to last for approximately 45 minutes to one hour.

Recruitment and Procedures. Procedures related to participant criteria, recruitment, confidentiality, and interview procedures were presented to the pilot-study participants and discussed. One pilot-participant suggested utilizing snow-balling sampling technique and professional connections to secure the greatest number of participants. Another pilot-participant reported having success in using the CESNET listserv to recruit research participants for qualitative studies with relatively small samples. It was suggested that the call for participants be more specific in terms of who is eligible to participate. The focus-group participants reported that they were unclear if Counselor Educators in programs offering only one or two online courses could participate or if they needed to be teaching in a fully online program. Each participant said they believed that counselor educators who are engaged in online counselor training

would be eager to participate as a means to validate this modality of counselor training. All pilot-participants encouraged sending of interview questions to participants prior to the interview so that study participants would have the time to develop reflective answers. One pilot-participant suggested emailing the transcribed interview to each participant to verify the accuracy of his or her interview.

All pilot-participants agreed that a video-conferencing interview format would be useful in facilitating a more personal connection with the study participants. One individual indicated that Counselor Educators involved in online counselor training should be comfortable using video-conferencing software, but having the option of a phone interview was an adequate alternative. A pilot-participant reported having offered similar options when conducting qualitative interviews and found that the online software program (Web-Ex) to conduct phone interviews was beneficial in the data analysis process because video-recording of the researcher and audio-recording of the participant is provided. Participants indicated that the video-recording portion of the interview was helpful at times when the audio was difficult to distinguish.

Following a discussion of the study procedures, the interview questions were reviewed following the order of the items as presented in Appendix C.

Preparation. The first interview question (i.e., *Please describe your training specific to developing and facilitating online counselor training.*) was clear and the focus group participants did not have any feedback or suggestions. One of the participants noted that the second question (i.e., *Please describe how you became involved with online counselor training.*) might not get at the process or motivations of how someone became

involved in online counselor training. Another participant followed that comment by stating that it would make a difference if someone actively sought out online counselor training versus someone who was asked to participate in online counselor training as a job requirement. A participant suggested that this additional data about how participants became involved in online counselor training might be explored in their answers to question three (i.e., *What was the process like for you in adjusting to and learning about training counselors in the online environment?*) or through follow-up questions from the primary researcher. All three participants reported that question three was clear and they thought the breakdown of professional and personal seemed appropriate in targeting two different aspects of adjustment to online teaching.

Course Development. A participant pointed out that the courses she had taught were already developed, therefore she had not developed a course for online counselor training. Another participant agreed that they had not been involved in the entire development process, but had updated and refreshed already developed courses. This led to a discussion among the focus group that a question about how participants' programs approach course development for online counselor training would be helpful for giving context to participants' answers. All participants thought question four (i.e., *How does your teaching philosophy inform your course development for training counselor online?*) was an important question to ask and was clearly worded. One participant disclosed that she liked question five (i.e., *The literature suggests that many educators tend to directly transfer already existing face-to-face courses into online courses. a. What was the process of creating online courses like initially? b. How has this evolved over*

time?) because her experience in course development at her current university was very different than at her previous university. Another participant indicated that the sub-questions under question five were helpful in providing information for the evolution of participants' course development. Regarding question six (i.e., *The literature also suggests that particular online platforms, software, and tools are effective in facilitating different aspects of the learning process. a. What platforms, software, and tools have you utilized in training counselors online? b. What were your intentions in incorporating these into your courses?*), one participant suggested adding an additional sub-question about the effectiveness of the tools that participants implemented. The other two participants agreed that effectiveness would be an informative aspect to include; thus, this sub-question will be added to question six. All participants agreed that question seven (i.e., *What have been your greatest challenges in developing courses for online counselor training?*) was clear and important to explore.

Moving Forward. The participants agreed that the wording of question eight (i.e., *Thinking beyond your own specific context, what preparation do you view as important/critical for counselor educators who train counselors in the online environment?*) was helpful in prompting him or her to think about the broader critical aspects of preparing counselor educators to train counselor online. A participant suggested breaking question nine (i.e., *What supports or training do you believe would improve your effectiveness in training counselors in the online environment?*) down with more specific sub-questions, similar to question three, to target various areas of support and training. All participants agreed and thought sub-question targeting the institutional,

departmental, professional, and personal levels would provide contextually relevant data. Participants did not have any suggestions for additional content areas that they felt were missing from the interview.

Modifications

Recruitment and Procedures. The following modifications were made to the full study based on the feedback received from the focus-group in the pilot study and faculty members during the primary researcher's dissertation proposal. First, the participants' suggestion of using snowballing sampling method was utilized and added to the recruitment documentation. Also, clarification of participant criteria was made to ensure that potential participants were aware that it is not required that they be teaching in a fully online counselor education program to participate. This study aimed to explore the experiences of Counselor Educators training counselors in the online environment, which might be taking place within traditional face-to-face programs as well as fully-online programs. Therefore, the participant criteria were changed to more clearly reflect this eligibility requirement. Another modification was that the interviews were only audio-recorded to ensure participant privacy.

Interview Questions. Interview questions were modified based on feedback from participants in the pilot study and from the primary researcher's dissertation committee. The total number of interview questions was reduced from 12 to nine to account for time limitations. Questions were revised to more directly gather information pertaining to participants' experiences with different aspects of providing online counselor training. Additionally, several questions from the original interview that gathered descriptive

information were transferred to the participant questionnaire. The revised interview questions can be found in Appendix D.

Full Study

Participant Recruitment

In accordance with CQR, participants should have depth of experience in the phenomenon being studied (Hill et al., 1997). Hill et al. (1997) recommended that participant selection should be random, but they also acknowledged that random sampling presents challenges for qualitative researchers aiming to study specific phenomenon. Hill et al., (2005) suggested a sample size of 8-15 participants for a study in which one to two-hour interviews are conducted, so that the representation of multiple experiences is captured and to account for unexpected variability that could impact the analysis and grouping of data.

Participants were recruited by contacting, via email, Program Chairs or Coordinators at all 311 CACREP accredited Counselor Education programs. Participants for this study were Counselor Educators who have or are currently teaching at least one online course in a CACREP accredited counselor education program. Purposeful criterion sampling (i.e., subjects are selected based on meeting specified inclusion criteria) was used to increase the likelihood that participants would provide data that that was valid to the phenomenon and research questions being studied. Participants were screened based on the following criteria:

- Participants must hold a doctoral degree in Counselor Education or a closely related field to ensure familiarity with the education and training of counselors and identify with the counseling profession.
- Participants must currently teach or have taught at least one fully online course in a CACREP accredited counselor education program within the past year. This teaching experience may have taken place in an online counselor training program or a traditional face-to-face online counselor training program.
- Participants must agree to complete a 60-minute interview that will be audio-recorded.

Procedures

Prior to data collection, the research team met to review the CQR process and engaged in a bracketing process to gain awareness of, and then set aside assumptions and biases about online counselor training. Each member of the research team read the seminal articles addressing the development of, and revisions to, the CQR process (Hill et al., 1997; Hill et al., 2005). Additionally, research team members read selected chapters from Hill's *Consensual qualitative research: A practical resource for investigating social science phenomena* (2012). The research team's initial meeting included reviewing, outlining, and discussing the CQR process. Research team members had varied experience with CQR. Two research team members had received training on the CQR process as part of the doctoral training, but had never conducted or participated in a CQR study. The third research team member had extensive knowledge and experience with the CQR methodology.

Data collection was gathered through interviews, which is consistent with CQR methodology. A recruitment letter stating the purpose of the study and disclosing any potential risks to the participant was distributed to potential participants through email. The researcher encouraged all potential participants to contact him with any questions or concerns regarding participation in the study via email or by phone.

Once a participant agreed to join the study, the primary researcher emailed copies of the informed consent, the participant questionnaire, and the interview questions at least five days prior to the interview. Participants completed and emailed the informed consent and the participant questionnaire to the primary researcher prior to the interview. The interview questions were provided to participants prior to the interview to encourage deeper reflection on their experiences of online counselor training. Furthermore, providing interview questions beforehand was recommended by Hill et al. (1997) with the goal of gathering rich data during the interview process.

Interview sessions were conducted using an online video-conferencing system (Google Hangouts) and were audio-recorded. A separate audio-recorder was used to provide a back-up audio copy of the interviews. Phone interviews were an alternative option for participants. Phone interviews were conducted using an online conference software (Google Hangouts) that allowed for audio-recording of the interview.

The interview process began with an assessment of the quality of audio and video communication to ensure that the researcher and participant could clearly communicate with one another. The primary researcher checked with participants to see if they had any

questions regarding informed consent. Participants were notified that psychological risks or consequences were unlikely as a result of participating in the study.

Interview questions were administered using a semi-structured interview design, meaning that additional question were asked as they appeared relevant to the conversation. Following the completion of an interview, the primary researcher transcribed the interview. All interview transcripts were stored securely under two levels of password protection on the primary researcher's computer. All data transmission between research team members was password protected. To protect anonymity, participants were identified numerically by their chronological interview order (1st person interviewed was identified by the number 1).

Interview Questions

Interview questions were constructed based on a thorough review of the online education and online counselor training literature and were revised based on feedback attained during the pilot-study and the dissertation proposal. The experiences and perceptions of the lead researcher and faculty advisor informed the construction of the questions. The primary author of the interview questions was the lead researcher of the study, who was grounded in the extant literature and had taught online undergraduate coursework, co-taught a doctoral level hybrid course, and supervised counselors-in-training in the online environment. The faculty adviser was a Counselor Education faculty member with extensive experiences in both qualitative research methods and counselor training. Hill et al. (2012) recommend developing six to 10 open-ended interview questions for a one-hour interview. This provides enough structure for the

participants to share their experiences with online counselor training, while also providing the freedom to discuss the aspects of their experiences most relevant for them. The interview questions for this study can be found in Appendix D.

Coding the Data

Research Team

The research team for this study was comprised of three individuals. The primary researcher was a white male doctoral student who reviewed the literature related to online higher education and online counselor training for approximately two years. The second member of the research team was the primary researcher's dissertation chair and a full-time faculty member and Chair of the Department of Counseling and Educational Development. He became familiar with the online counselor training literature through the writings of, and discussions with, the primary researcher. The third member of the research team was a female third-year doctoral student in the Department of Counseling and Educational Development who has taken formal coursework in qualitative methodologies. All research team members read Hill et al.'s (1997; 2005) two seminal articles on CQR and select book chapters from Hill (2012) prior to the first research team meeting. The primary researcher provided an overview and the research team engaged in a discussion of the CQR process at the first research team meeting. The external auditor for this study was a full-time faculty member in the Department of Counseling and Educational Development who has extensive knowledge and experience in qualitative methodologies.

Bracketing

Bracketing is a process whereby researchers discuss their personal experiences, opinions, perspectives, and expectations about the phenomenon being explored (Hill et al., 1997). The purpose of bracketing is to acknowledge subjective bias held by the researchers so that biases can, as much as possible, be set-aside throughout the data collection and analysis processes (Hill et al., 1997). All members of the research team should engage in a bracketing process prior to the collection of data (Hill et al., 2005). For the current study, this process was led by the primary researcher. Hill et al. (2005) suggested that the results of the bracketing process should be reported in the final study. The results of the bracketing process for the current study can be found in Appendix F.

Data Coding

The primary researcher transcribed the interviews conducted for this study and distributed password protected copies of the transcripts electronically to each member of the research team. All identifying information was removed from the transcripts to ensure participant anonymity. The researchers did not use pre-determined domains for the initial process of data analysis. However, the research team members acknowledged that each research question was intended to gather specific information about participants' experiences, therefore the process of developing domains would be influenced by these questions. All members of the research team independently read through the first five transcripts and coded all data into domains and emailed coded copies of the transcripts to the other members of the research team. The team then held multiple meetings to discuss

the initial domain coding and came to a consensus on the domains occurring across the first five transcripts.

The research team developed nine initial domains, with a tenth domain designated to contain information that did not fit into one of the other domains, but also did not warrant its own domain. The remaining four transcripts were divided among the research team members and the established domains were applied to the remaining transcripts. As part of coding the remaining four transcripts, the research team members also looked for data that necessitated the development of additional domains. After the remaining transcripts had been coded into domains, the research team came to a consensus and the primary researcher developed a master list of all transcripts with their coded domains.

Once consensus on the domains had been reached, research team members divided the transcripts in order to code the core ideas within the domains. The primary researcher coded the core ideas for six of the transcripts and the other two member split the remaining three transcripts. After the transcripts had been coded with core ideas, all research team members reviewed all transcripts until consensus on the core ideas was reached. Following this consensus process, the primary researcher developed a master spreadsheet that included all transcript data, domains, and core ideas. This master spreadsheet was sent to the auditor for review. The auditor provided several suggestions for the team to review. Each of these suggestions was reviewed by the research team and a consensus was reached on what alterations needed to be made.

Next, the research team engaged in the cross-analysis process by developing patterns and themes that emerged directly from the interview data. Research team

members independently broke down core ideas into categories and came to a consensus on the wording and meaning of each category. The consensus version of the cross-analysis was sent to the auditor for review and the auditor provided feedback. The research team discussed the auditor's feedback and came to a consensus on how to incorporate the feedback into the final results of the study. Lastly, frequency labels were applied based on the number of participants who provided data that fit into each of the categories.

Instrumentation

The current study employee two forms of instrumentation: the primary researcher and research team as instruments and a participant questionnaire.

Researcher(s) as Instruments

The researcher in qualitative research is the primary instrument for collecting data (Hays & Singh, 2012). The quality of the data gathered in qualitative research is highly dependent on the primary researcher's ability to establish a trusting relationship with participants (Hays & Singh, 2012). In the CQR research, the research team forms the primary instrument for analyzing data (Hill et al., 1997). The researcher exercises discipline in closely following the CQR process to acknowledge bias and use the consensus process to strengthen the analysis of data (Hill et al., 1997).

Demographic Questionnaire

All participants were given the following demographic questionnaire designed by the primary researcher:

Please answer the following:

1. Gender:
    - Male
    - Female
    - Transgendered
    - Other _____
2. Age _____
3. Race/Ethnicity:
    - American Indian or Alaska Native
    - Asian
    - Black or African American
    - Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
    - White
    - Hispanic or Latino
    - Other _____
4. Please identify all training and/or preparation you have received specific to online counselor training (mark all that apply):
    a. Workshops
    b. Reading
    c. Co-teaching
    d. Webinars
    e. Formal course work

f. Conference programs

g. Online tutorials

h. Consultations

i. Peer-mentoring

j. Other _____

5. For what type of academic institution do you provide online counselor training?

   - Public
   - Private non-profit
   - Private for-profit

6. Please list the titles of each online counselor training course you have developed:

7. Please list the titles of each online counselor training course you have taught:

8. What types of online teaching tools have you utilized in the courses you have taught (mark all that apply)?

   - Synchronous (e.g., video-conferencing, text-based chat, etc.)
   - Asynchronous (e.g., discussion boards, blogs, social media etc.)

9. How effective is the online format for delivering courses you have personally taught?

Very Effective	Somewhat Effective	Somewhat Ineffective	Very Ineffective
1	2	3	4

10. Please describe how you became involved in online counselor training. Did you actively seek out opportunities or was it required by your institution?

11. What is your preferred method of contact you for follow-up questions and future communication?

    Email: _____

    Phone: _____

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

In the current study, the researcher investigated the experiences of Counselor Educators providing online counselor training to address the research questions proposed:

What are the experiences of Counselor Educators who develop and deliver online counselor training?

a. How do Counselor Educators describe their experiences of translating their teaching philosophy and practice into the online environment?
b. How do Counselor Educators describe the successes and challenges they have experienced in developing and delivering online counselor training?
c. How do Counselor Educators describe their experiences of support in developing and delivering online counselor training?

Participants included Counselor Educators that were currently teaching or had taught at least one fully online course in a CACREP accredited counselor education program within the past year. Each participant completed a participant questionnaire and a one-hour semi-structured interview. In this chapter, the results of the current study are presented. A description of the participant sample will be presented, followed by the results from the qualitative interviews data analysis.

Description of the Sample

Participants for this study included nine Counselor Educators. Seven of the nine participants were female and two were male. Eight participants identified their race/ethnicity as White and one identified as Black/African American. Ages of participants ranged from 34 to 58 with a mean age of 44.

Six out of the nine participants were employed at public educational institutions, two were employed at private non-profit institutions, and one participant was employed at a private for-profit institution. Seven participants reported using both synchronous and asynchronous online formats in their online counselor training and two reported using only asynchronous formats. Participants were also asked to provide information regarding training they have participated in related to online counselor training. Eight participants reported attending workshops, eight participants reported reading articles or books related to online teaching, five participants reported attending webinars, five participants reported consulting with technology professionals, four participants reported viewing online tutorials, four participants reported receiving peer-mentoring, three participants reported attending conference programs related to online teaching, and two participants reported having formal coursework that prepared them for online teaching.

Participants were asked to rate their personal experience of the effectiveness of online counselor training for preparing counselors-in-training on the following four-point Likert-scale: 1) very effective, 2) somewhat effective, 3) somewhat ineffective, 4) very ineffective. Two participants reported experiencing online counselor training as *very effective,* six reported experiencing online counselor training as *somewhat effective,* and

one participant reported experiencing online counselor training *very ineffective*. Participants were also asked if they became involved in online counselor training by choice and/or through requirements of their program. Three participants reported that they both sought out online counselor training and were required by their institution to train counselors online. Three participants reported seeking out online counselor training opportunities and three participants reported being required by their institution to train counselors in the online environment.

Participants were asked to list the online counselor training courses they had developed and the online counselor training courses that they had facilitated. The online counselor training courses that participants developed were:

- Leadership, Advocacy, and Consultation in School Counseling
- Counselor Supervision Training
- Addictions Counseling
- Orientation to School Counseling
- Appraisal Procedures for Counselors
- Clinical Mental Health Counseling Practicum
- DSM Diagnosis in Counseling
- Psychopathology
- Human Development Across the Lifespan
- Group counseling
- School counseling practicum
- School counseling internship
- Legal and Ethical Issues in Counseling
- Counseling Children
- Family violence, trauma, and crisis intervention

The online counselor training courses that participants facilitated were:

- Lifespan Development
- Leadership, Advocacy, and Consultation in School Counseling
- Crisis, Trauma, and Response

- Vicarious Trauma and Compassion Fatigue
- Counseling Process
- Group Counseling Process
- Addictions Counseling
- Appraisal Procedures for Counselors
- Clinical Mental Health Counseling Practicum
- DSM Diagnosis in Counseling
- Psychopathology
- Group counseling
- School counseling practicum
- School counseling internship
- Legal and Ethical Issues in Counseling
- Counseling Children
- Family violence, trauma, and crisis intervention

As is evident, participants had developed or taught courses from across the masters' level training core as well as a number of specialty counseling courses. Participants reported having taught skill courses (Counseling Process, Group Counseling and Internship/Practicum) online as well as non-skills based courses.

Summary of Findings

Analysis of the nine qualitative interviews resulted in the development of nine domains, with a tenth domain for data that did not fit into the other domains. These ten domains describe the experiences of Counselor Educators training counselors in the online environment: 1) teaching philosophy, 2) relational practice, 3) translating teaching into the online environment, 4) online impact on course development and implementation, 5) personal adjustment to teaching online, 6) challenges, 7) successes, 8) evolution of teaching online, 9) supports, and 10) other. Each of these domains will be described below, along with categories that were identified within each domain. The table below provides the definitions for each domain.

Table 2

Domain Definitions

Domain	Definition
Teaching philosophy	Beliefs about the teaching and learning process.
Relational practice	The interpersonal aspects of the teaching and learning process.
Translating teaching into the online environment	Experiences of transitioning teaching philosophy and practice into the online environment.
Online impact on course development and implementation	The influences that the online medium has on course development and implementation.
Personal adjustment to teaching online	Experiences of adjustment that fall outside of the "tasks" of developing and implementing online counselor training.
Challenges	Difficulties and/or barriers experienced in the process of training counselors online.
Successes	Experiences that were positive or seemed effective in training counselors in the online environment.
Evolution of teaching online	How participants' approaches to online counselor training have changed over time.
Supports	Experiences of support related to training counselors in the online environment.

Table 3

Domains, Categories and Subcategories, Participants, Frequency Labels

Domains	Categories and Subcategories	Participants	Frequency Labels
Teaching Philosophy	Constructivism	1, 3, 5	Variant
	Diverse forms of teaching and learning	7, 9	Variant

Relational Practice	Educator-student interaction	1, 4, 5, 7, 8	Typical
	Discussion boards	3, 5, 7, 8, 9	Typical
	Heavy reliance	3, 5, 9	Variant
	Students' engagement	9	Rare
	For assessment	8	Rare
	Self-monitoring discussions	7	Rare
	Having strong educator-student relationships are key factors in online counselor training	1, 3, 4, 6	Variant
	Online relationships are difficult to develop and maintain	1, 2, 9	Variant
	Student-student interactions are an important aspect of online learning	3, 6, 7	Variant
	Online learning lacks some of the immediacy of face-to-face teaching	3, 8	Variant
	Various technologies can be used to connect with students online	2, 6	Variant
Translating teaching into the online environment	The interpersonal aspects of teaching are more difficult in the online environment	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9	General
	Many technologies are available for teaching online	4, 7	Variant
	Some assignments are easily translated from face-to-face to online environments	7, 9	Variant
	Teaching online and face-to-face are inherently different	2, 4	Variant
		1, 5	Variant

	The online environment can feel static		
Online impact on course development and implementation	The organization of a course is more important in the online environment	7, 9	Variant
	Students are required to produce more work in online classes	7, 8	Variant
Personal adjustment to teaching online	Motivation to learn new technologies made adjustment easier	1, 2, 4, 8, 9	Typical
	Experienced a learning curve with technology	2, 3, 5, 8	Variant
	Comfort-level with technology made adjustment easier	1, 2, 4	Variant
	Frustrated by how time-intensive online teaching is	2, 5	Variant
Challenges	Monitoring students	1, 2, 5, 6, 8, 9	Typical
	Time-intensive	2, 3, 5, 7, 8	Typical
	Technically Challenging	2, 5, 8	Variant
	Educator-student connection	1, 9	Variant
	Lack of interpersonal cues	1, 9	Variant
	Logistically difficult to make changes to a course once it is up and running	6, 7	Variant
	Night-time teaching is difficult	6, 7	Variant
	Course structure	2, 7	Variant
Successes	Online learning is a good fit for a particular type of student	1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 9	Typical
	Accessibility and flexibility	1, 7, 9	Variant

	Positive student feedback	3, 6, 7	Variant
	Student accountability	1, 7, 9	Variant
	Able to connect with students	3, 7	Variant
	High quality students	6, 9	Variant
	Increased student-student interaction	5, 7	Variant
	Personally fulfilling	2, 4	Variant
Evolution of teaching online	Increased comfort-level with online teaching	2, 3, 5, 6, 7	Typical
	Increased collaboration with colleagues	1, 6	Variant
	More detailed explanations of assignments	7, 9	Variant
	Increased interaction and discussion online	4, 5	Variant
	Increased confidence that online counselor training is solidified	3, 5	Variant
	Use of more creative teaching strategies	1, 9	Variant
Supports	Institutional support	All	General
	Training	1, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9	Typical
	Financial incentive or course release	3, 5, 6, 8, 9	Typical
	Instructional design support	2, 5, 8	Variant
	Technology and space	4, 7, 9	Variant
	Technology assistance	7, 8	Variant

Domains and Categories

Teaching Philosophy

Within the first domain, Counselor Educators described their beliefs about the teaching and learning process. Counselor Educators described their teaching philosophy in two categories: a) constructivism and b) diverse forms of teaching and learning.

Constructivism. Three participants described having a constructivist teaching philosophy. One participant described her teaching approach by stating:

> Um, I, you know some of it has stayed the same over the years for me, and that is that I think, um, our material as counselor educators really is a combination of me providing information to students, but a lot of the work is them making sense of it and making sense of how it fits for them, so really a constructivist approach.

Another participant said:

> Okay, um, it's constructivist, um, particularly with the courses that I teach, um, it gives students an opportunity to really reflect on, on their lives and their um, their development and their progress in life, and so there's that connection where they are learning the content, but then they have opportunities to apply it to their lives too.

The third participant described a similar philosophy of helping students understand content and integrate that content into their lives.

Diverse Forms of Teaching and Learning. Two participants described believing that diverse forms of teaching are important for students in the learning process. One participant described diverse forms of teaching as:

> I'm a huge believer in Howard Gardner's multiple, um, now here comes ACA brain, multiple learning styles, multiple intelligences, there we go (laughing), so if we are, as far as counseling is concerned, if we are working on a difficult concept, I may find a video online that demonstrates that concept or I may work with a student to role-play that or I may, um, I may search for a visual online that represents what um, whatever concept is, or I taught, I just finished teaching consultation and there weren't any visuals in our book, so there was no way for students to see a model of what consultation could look like and I, so I developed a couple of charts and diagrams for students so that they could actually see what consultation, the consultation models in different settings and who would be doing what, um, coming up with scenarios um, what-if kind of scenarios, choose your own adventure scenarios. Um, in the courses that I have flexibility with, maybe changing up an assignment from a written assignment to uh, more of a creative assignment where students can either create something, um, do a presentation or um, submit, submit the product some other way. Um, I've had students before write songs to um, to demonstrate the concepts.

Relational Practice

All nine participants described various aspects of their teaching practice that were related to interpersonal interactions with students. Although interpersonal interactions were also discussed in other domains, this domain emerged specifically from participants' descriptions of their experiences of interactions with and between students that facilitate the teaching and learning processes. Counselor educators described the relational practices experiences in the following categories: a) educator-student interactions help students integrate course content with their experiences, b) the use of discussion boards to facilitate interaction c) having strong educator-student relationships are key factors in online counselor training, d) online relationships are difficult to develop and maintain, e) student-student interactions are an important aspect of online learning, and f) online learning lacks some of the immediacy of face-to-face teaching, and g)various technologies can be used to connect with students online.

Educator-student Interaction. Five participants described the importance of being able to interact with students to help them process what course content means within the contexts of their own experiences. One counselor educator stated:

> So I'm thinking specifically with the Lifespan Development course where we are, we are learning about the different stages of development, but then we are also reflecting on ourselves and where we are and even our own, um, early recollections and our own experiences during adolescent years, so um, trying to just help student to um, not just, not just understand the, not just hear the knowledge and learn the knowledge, but really be able to apply it to themselves because I feel like the more they know about themselves, the better they will be able to help someone else one day.

Another participant said:

> I gives students a tone of stuff to read and, um, a lot of field experiences, I integrate a lot of service learning, volunteering, and then we do a lot of reflecting and processing on what comes up with them out in the field in relation to what they are reading and discovering about themselves.

The Use of Discussion Boards to Facilitate Interaction. Five participants described their experiences in using discussion boards to facilitate interaction in the online environment. Participants talked about their experiences using discussion boards in four ways: a) heavy reliance on discussion boards, b) students' engagement on discussion boards, c) discussion boards for assessment, and d) discussion boards allow students to self-monitor discussions.

Heavy Reliance. Three participants talked about relying heavily on discussion boards to facilitate student interaction and learning. When sharing her experiences of facilitating online interaction, one participant said: "So um, I have to really rely heavily

on that discussion board piece." Two other participants described using discussion boards as one of the few ways to facilitate student interaction in asynchronous online formats.

Students' Engagement. One participant described positive experiences of student engagement in online discussion boards:

> Um, I find the online discussions to be very engaging, they typically use each other's first names and they will respond to information, of they will say hey I noticed you had a question about this issue, here's a resource that I found that might help you, or here's something that I use in my school that could help you. So they do really start to build a little community in the discussion forums.

For Assessment. One participant described using the interactions taking place in discussion boards to assess where students are at:

> Having those discussions and being able to connect it to real-life situations and you know, just being able to see where's the student at and what's their sense of understanding? How can I help them build on that, that sense of where they are currently at.

Self-monitoring Discussions. One participant described her experience in using discussion boards to allow students to self-monitor discussions:

> And self-monitoring their peers, I think that's been really critical, uh, particularly in the online setting, having peers who feel comfortable being able to self-monitor each other as far as learning and say, yes, this is have you thought about this. Me stepping back so I can allow that to happen organically versus saying, okay maybe we need to get back on track here, I do do that, but I like to have peers kind of self-monitor each other.

Strong Educator-student Relationships. Four participants described educator-student relationships as being a vital aspect of online counselor training. One participant described the importance of connecting with students:

> I think continuing to be creative and innovative around how to, how and ways to increase the personal connection. I do, I feel that that is the number one thing because content is one thing, um, but how I integrate that into a style of counseling is totally another. I mean I can be an expert on various aspects of, you know, theory and techniques and DSM and all that kind of stuff, and yet if I cannot connect, it's, it's really kind of worthless, and so I think continuing to flesh out ways to be personally engaged, are really the key for educators.

Another participant talked about connecting with students so that they know that he is invested in their training:

> I think we can certainly support, and we see this in the school counseling research clearly, that when students are connected with their, with the institution, when they are connected to schools, whether it be through sports or though just their peers or through their connections with their professors, again they're more likely to stay in and be successful and succeed and eventually graduate, and so I think the same thing should be true with our online courses. How can we help students feel connected with the faculty, with their peers, with again, just the institution as a whole so that they can stay in and be more successful in that process?

Two participants described the importance of developing connections with students as a means to help give students what they need on an individual-level in their counselor training.

Online Relationships are Difficult. Three participants described the relationships that are important in training counselors are difficult to develop and

maintain in the online environment. In speaking about the difficulty of developing and maintaining these relationships, one participant stated:

> I think the barrier, one, I think there's a couple of barriers. One is time, I mean honestly I could require that I speak to students at least twice a term by phone. I could do that. It's not required in the course, but probably with academic freedom, I could require it. I know that some instructors do a conference call in the beginning of the term, um, and I know for me it's not so much that I resist that, but I know it's time and I know that their schedules are so, all over the place, and I think of my god, how would we ever find time for all of us to either have a conference call or for me to actually have a phone conversation with every single one of them.

Another participant described how the level of connectedness she feels with students in the online environment is lower than the connectedness she feels with students in her face-to-face courses.

Student-student Interactions are Important. Three participants described creating space for student-student interactions as an important aspect of their learning process. One participant stated: "The interaction amongst the students is really important, um, you know brief small group activities, coming back together and hearing each other, that's, that's very important". Another participant shared how he integrates student-student connection into his course development process:

> So more discussion boards or even more synchronous approaches, for them to feel connected with one another. I think we need to look at any and all um, of those ways and those are just a few examples of course, in order to increase that connection.

Lack of Immediacy. Two participants described using immediacy with students as part of their face-to-face teaching and experiencing a lack of immediacy in the online environment. One participant said:

> It's harder for me to gauge where the student really is, the depth of their understanding, because I can post a question, but unless I spend a lot of time monitoring their responses, you know, and time passes as well, so I post a question, it might be a couple of days before the student answers the question. Depending on when they answer it, it might take me a day or more to get back to respond to that question and I can only go by what they've written, not how comfortable did they look when they were talking about it, were they hesitant when they were talking about it, I'm, I'm missing those physical cues, and that, that concerns me with the online environment.

Another participant described her experience of putting recorded lectures online and wishing she was able to give those lectures to live students so she could gauge their reactions and have in-the-moment discussions about the content.

Various Technologies to Use. Two participants described their experiences connecting with students and helping students connect with each other using various technologies. One participant stated:

> I like to think of finding ways to have physical, just some kind of connection, uh, some kind of physical presence with students, whether that be through, um, an introduction that I give at the beginning of class, maybe just through my, through emails that I sent out, just a personal touch. Um, maybe I make a phone call to a student and again, have kind of that, at least voice connection, um, so I think through any of those ways, I try to actually, in one of my classes I've created some videos based on the assignment, so they are able to hear my voice, are able to follow along as kind of a point-cast you know kind of thing and um, so they are able to put a voice with the assignment, again just to have those physical, I'll use this in quotes almost, but kind of a physical touch there where they can feel like, you know what this person is not just an avatar out there, but is a real person and it's making them again have that, at least that perception of that connection.

Another participant described a similar experience of using various forms of technology in an attempt to connect with students.

Translating Teaching into the Online Environment

Within the translating teaching into the online environment domain, participants described their experiences of translating their personal teaching philosophy and approach into the online environment. Counselor educators described translating teaching into the online environment in the following categories: a) the interpersonal aspects of teaching are more difficult in the online environment, b) many technologies are available for teaching online, c) some assignments are easily translated from face-to-face to online environments, d) teaching online and face-to-face are inherently different, and e) the online environment feels static.

Interpersonal Aspects are Difficult. Eight participants described experiencing difficulty with the interpersonal aspects of teaching in the online environment. One participant stated:

> I can't see them, I can't be with them and so to be able to look into their eyes and engage them when I see that they're struggling with a particular issue, hear their voice, see their body language and move toward that, as a counselor educator, its, I can't do it. It's virtually impossible. So when I read their posts and their papers, I listen, I look for fears that come up for them or resistance or um, any type of anxiety and I usually move toward that in the content in order to try to flesh some of that out that I'm able to do in person.

Seven other participants described similar experiences of difficulty in reading non-verbal communication or having spontaneous discussions about course content based

on students' reactions and questions. One participant described experiencing difficulty with the interpersonal aspects related to online supervision:

> My supervision style, um, has been a little harder to translate into um, into online teaching, because I am a very interpersonal um, reading body language, um, my supervision style is more kind of physically, environmentally, spatially-aware of that person in front of me, and you know online you get here up (pointing out that you get a limited amount of visual reference online), even then sometimes you don't, you don't get that and you notice I talk with my hands and I use my hands for examples. Unless I have them right in front of my face it's hard. Um, I'm still able, I'm really big on using, using a student's work to demonstrate to them where their skills are and talk about where they maybe could do other things, um, I really love IPR, I've found that those are translatable online, you just have to do it a little differently. Um, your focus and attention, um, I find myself focusing a lot of the person in front of me and they may have a little tiny window, just like this, um, and you just have to be more aware of facial features. Um, the other piece to it, translating online group supervision, um, some of the things that I would do in group supervision as far as role-play, I'm still working on how to translate that into a group, um, you know given that you can't have the two peers sit across from each other and interact, there are eleven other cameras on and eleven other people in the room and they are kind of searching for where's their face, what am I doing, um, so I think role-play has been really difficult to translate into particularly group supervision.

Many Technologies Available for Teaching. Two participants described experiences incorporating different technologies into their teaching practices. One participant stated:

> Instead of being in a classroom where I teach for 3 hours, um, I'm in a classroom teaching for 1 hour, but the students still get to interact with me, um, they turn on their webcams and talk to me just as if they were in the room with me or they type questions if they, if they don't want to show their face they can type questions, um, because you know we are all shy and sometimes we want to be in our pajamas while we take a class online (laughing) so uh, I give them the flexibility to do what they want, whatever they feel comfortable with, or they can watch the video lecture and that one-hour time is a time for me to also add extra things in, answer questions, tell them cool stories if that's what they want, whatever they

> need and I have found that they feel comfortable for asking for what they need, uh, I can show them those diagrams, I can show them cool videos, uh, I use course announcements as a way to um, kind of keep up the interaction and keep up the motivation and so I add a lot of humorous memes and humorous stories into my announcements to kind of keep students engaged um, or share with them um, kind of cool web resources. I've also found that it's really awesome to be able to go on the internet when you're teaching and go, oh that's a great question, here let's look it up, or hey, could you look that up for me real quick and you share your resource with us. It's been amazing, I don't have that option in the classroom, uh, or sometimes something happens in the news and maybe I didn't get to see it that day, but maybe a student saw it and we can pull it up and we can look at it together and I feel like, um, it's been really cool, just definitely changed the way I think about if I went back into a face-to-face classroom, how I would structure the classroom.

Another Counselor Educator described how he has enjoyed discovering and incorporating new technologies from outside of his university's offerings as a way to not feel restricted by the course management system his university uses.

Some Assignments are Easily Translatable. Two participants described how they were able to easily translate certain assignments they had been using in their face-to-face classes into online classes. One participant described her experience of being able to respond to students and give quizzes much like she would in the face-to-face environment:

> I thought it was going to be difficult and what I have found, it's not as difficult as uh, as I previously anticipated. Um, the way our courses are structured, students submit discussion boards, so they have discussion boards and that's kind of their self-monitored peer interaction, with me adding in as well and providing examples, um so I've able to kind of share cool videos or share um, examples of things that I've encountered in my work as part of the discussion boards, I just have to type it. Uh, there is a way for me to video-record myself responding to what they're saying, so I can record a response and post it online so that they can see my face going, wow that's great and let me tell you about what happened to me, uh, this is how this might apply when you're in a clinical mental health

> setting or when you're in the schools. Uh, so that part has been really um, really cool. Students you know have quizzes online so that has been easily translatable and as far as assignments

Another participant also described being able to use quizzes and tests much like he would in the face-to-face environment to assess knowledge and prepare counselors-in-training for licensure exams.

Teaching is Inherently Different. Two Counselor Educators described their experiences of teaching face-to-face and online as inherently different. One Counselor Educator described her experience in attempting to directly translate her teaching from the face-to-face environment into the online environment:

> There are so many possibilities for online, when you think of all the things you do and say in a classroom and all the possibilities of how, both the possibilities and the challenges, of how to translate that now over into a virtual environment that is not often synchronous, when we get to practicum and internship there are more synchronous opportunities, just as there are, you still have paired supervision and individual supervision or group supervision, you still have all these and they have to be and they are synchronous, but when you're carrying over, typically face-to-face content and wanting to in a practical way and a programmatic way, match that experience, uh, in the online environment, then you know, all of a sudden you can't pick up all the nuances in a classroom or all of the, maybe the gaps that you sometimes fill in just through your talking through your experiences or having, um, you know, impromptu group discussions, you can't match that exactly and so, so again, whereas templates and instructional design consultation have been very helpful, you know there are still just practical matters, the practical matter of what makes sense in the online world, still keeping with program objectives, still keeping with our own desire and goals to match the two learning environments, um, in terms of learning outcomes, there are still just those practical, those possibilities and challenges as to how to duplicate, as much as possible, while then recognizing and embracing the fact that online and face-to-face are different, inherently, in some ways.

Another participant described how he takes different approaches to teaching in the face-to-face and online environments because the modality itself requires different facilitation of learning.

Online Environment can Feel Static. Two participants described experiences of feeling like the online learning environment is static. When responding to a question about her experience in translating her constructivist teaching philosophy into the online environment, one participant said:

> Very very difficult, um, the online teaching I've been doing for the past, uh, almost 6 years, uh, to me is just very flat and very static, um, it, mainly because, um, it's just discussion based. The online program that I have been teaching with, they are starting to integrate more, um, I think constructivist approaches, like using video and using simulations, um, but for me, most of it is still that discussion based. They have questions to respond to, they write an academic essay in response to those, we all discuss them, um, but no matter how hard, I try to push on their development, it still stays very content focused, um, and so that to me translating constructivism to the online environment has been very very tedious.

A second participant described a similar experience of feeling like discussion-based online education was static and not interactive for students or educators.

Online Impact on Course Development and Implementation

Counselor educators that participated in this study described various aspects of their experiences where the online modality impacted their approach to course development and implementation. Two categories that emerged in this domain were: a) students are required to produce more work in online classes, and b) the organization of a course is more important in the online environment.

Organization is More Important Online. Two Counselor Educators described experiences of needing to be more organized in developing and implementing their online courses compared to face-to-face courses. One participant described that in her experience, course organization has been the most important factor in providing online education:

> I've mentioned everything that I find to be the most important with you know, clarity, communication, assessment, organization, you know I think organization is the number one piece for effective online teaching. If I had to name one thing it would be organization, be well-organized, have a clear path, a good plan.

Another participant shared a similar experience of needing to be more organized and ready to implement a course on day-one of an online course compared to being able to make adjustments easily in face-to-face courses.

Students Produce More Work Online. Two participants described experiences where they felt like students were required to produce more work in the online environment than they would in the face-to-face environment. One participant described her experience with feeling engaged with students because she sees more of their work in the online environment:

> I feel like I know my students, I know their work, I feel I'm engaged with them, they are turning in more product than they would in an on-campus class, um, so that's been helpful for me um, and even writing recommendations for students going oh yea, I remember you did that great project and thinking about how they were engaged throughout the entire course.

Another Counselor Educator described experiencing push-back from students in the online environment because of the increased workload:

> The students, they have expressed to me their frustrations in um, how do you say, the amount of time it takes them to read everybody's posts, and so they become very conscious of, well I need to say what I want to say in the least amount of words, so that my peers aren't having to put in all this extra time doing, you know, whatever. Um, and the same thing with the presentations, you know, I have individual presentations throughout the semester on different topics that I have my students do, and when you're meeting in-person we do presentations in-person, versus online, for example this semester I have 22 students in my class and we are using Blackboard to uh, record those presentations, but then my students have to go in and watch each one of those presentations, as do I, but my students are complaining about that, "What do you mean that we have to watch every single presentation?" Well you would be watching every single presentation if you were in class, well that's different, and so there's, this semester for some reason I've got a lot of push-back on that.

Personal Adjustment to Teaching Online

Another domain that emerged from participants' experiences was the personal adjustments they experienced as they transitioned to teaching in the online environment. This domain reflects the various experiences of participants that fall outside of the "tasks" of developing and implementing online counselor training. The categories that emerged in this domain were: a) motivation to learn new technologies made adjustment easier, b) experienced a learning curve with technology, c) comfort-level with technology made adjustment easier, and d) frustrated by how time-intensive online teaching is.

Motivation to Learn Technologies. Five participants described their experiences of being personally motivated to learn about new technologies and integrate them into

their teaching. One participant described her experience of being motivated to learn about teaching in the online modality:

> I take a lot of active online learning, you know, learning courses here at my university, I try to learn what tools are out there, I try to read Edutopia and all those other listervs or new blogs that tell about how to use technology in the field of education.

Another participant described his experience of being passionate and interested in technology:

> Uh, I guess, you know I really love this stuff, I mean I, it's my, it is my, you know some people like to do crossword puzzles, some people like to do Sudoku, I like to figure out technology, I mean I soak it up, I follow it, I read it, it's the content area that I really love and enjoy.

Other participants described similar experiences of being motivated to learn new technologies, try new tools in their teaching, and seek professional trainings on online teaching.

Experienced a Learning Curve with Technology. Four participants described experiencing a learning curve with technology as the transitioned into training counselors in the online environment. One participant described her experiences of anxiety and frustration as she learned how to use new technologies in online teaching:

> Yea, I had a lot of anxiety about it at first, um, you know thinking that the students were going to have more trouble with it, uh, and, and I did a bunch of um, workshops through my university to figure out how to use, you know, different tools and um, and, for example I'm a PC person and I don't know things like will this work on a Mac, will it work, now the deal is will it work on an iPad or you know (laughing), those different things that they try to use, uh, I had, I was

> anxious about that, um, and in fact, you know the first, first couple times I offered the class, I teach it once per year and it really was, there was a lot of technological trouble shooting, uh, and you know, things like files wouldn't open and this is a summer class, so it's six weeks long, so things are due every few days and if a student can't get a file to open then, they, they really need an extension on an assignment because it's going to take tech support 24 hours to get back with them to figure out, you know I was getting all these calls and emails like how do I open that such and such, or this video won't play and I, I am frankly terrible with those things, I can't, I can't help at all, but, and at first I found myself feeling frustrated with the students because um, you know, it seems like sometimes they weren't doing things ahead of time and so then the file wouldn't open and that would've been fine if they had done it 3 days ago, but they are trying to do it the day before the assignment is due and, and I really had to check that because, um, you know, it's a tight, it's a tight schedule, the students are busy so sometimes, you know, it's not necessarily that they are bad students, but sometimes 24 hours in advance was the first time they could, they could get to it and um, and is it reasonable for me to expect them to try to pre-pilot everything, um, in advance. I don't know, I ended up just kind of going with um, a lot of patience for technological failures.

Two participants shared similar experiences of anxiety and frustration as they engaged online education for the first time and encountered technical challenges. Another participant described experiencing the learning curve of training counselors in the online environment as "taxing".

Comfort-level with Technology. Three participants described having a high comfort-level with technology as something that eased their experience in adjusting to training counselors online. One participant stated:

> I've always felt pretty comfortable with technology, uh, and so I zip around in there pretty quickly. I haven't advanced to using, uh, probably, uh, voice, is it voicethread, like I could, there's a voice thing. Um, I haven't, and that's probably more of a time factor than anything, um, I just now conquered mailchimp so I think I'm doing pretty good, you know (laughing), and I've conquered Google Hangouts, uh, but I haven't, in terms of just basic discussion, video, um, watching process tapes online and doing just the basic online technology, it hasn't bothered me at all or caused me to have any type of real adjustment.

Two other participants described similar experiences of having a high comfort-level with technology that eased their transition into the online environment.

Frustrated with Time-intensity. Two participants described experiencing frustration related to how time-intensive online course development and implementation has been. One participant shared her experience of frustration:

> I'm, I'm not naturally savvy when it comes to technology, it, it takes time for me, I get frustrated with it, it feels slow at times, um, so yea just working through those, through those challenges of um, things like staying organized enough, as far as making sure that if module 6 was supposed to be posted that I didn't make module 7 available and not module 6, you know cuz you can make certain things available and certain things not, just small mistakes like that along the way um, have really created an environment where students have even had to be patient with me in my way of teaching online. Um, so just really learning to maneuver Blackboard and really learning to be comfortable with it, um, just making it a space that I'm proud of, so as time progressed I started you know, um really taking pride in something as simple as which theme I chose, so the color, the background of my page, or just the way that I structured or outlined the course, really taking pride in it and it takes time, it really takes, I believe it takes more time to manage the Blackboard, the Blackboard page than it does to create the lessons that need to be taught face-to-face.

Another participant shared a similar experience of being frustrated by the amount of time involved in developing an online course.

Challenges

The challenges domain emerged as Counselor Educators described the various difficulties and barriers they have experienced in developing and implementing online counselor training. Eight categories emerged within the challenges domain: a) monitoring students, b) time-intensive, c) technically challenging, d) educator-student connection, e)

lack of interpersonal cues, f) logistically difficult to make changes to a course once it is up and running, g) night-time teaching is difficult, h) course structure.

Monitoring Students. Six participants described how monitoring students in the online environment is a challenge. One participant described her experience of not being able to monitor students to assess their levels of understanding and engagement:

> It's harder for me to gauge where the student really is, the depth of their understanding, because I can post a question, but unless I spend a lot of time monitoring their responses, you know, and time passes as well, so I post a question, it might be a couple of days before the student answers the question. Depending on when they answer it, it might take me a day or more to get back to respond to that question and I can only go by what they've written, not how comfortable did they look when they were talking about it, were they hesitant when they were talking about it, I'm, I'm missing those physical cues, and that, that concerns me with the online environment. One of my other classes that I teach on Wednesday evenings, it has a section of in-house students and a section of online students in the same class, so part of the students are there and part of the students are coming in through that synchronous modality and so we are doing the video-conferencing and you know, we use the text chat at the bottom of the Blackboard and you know, so we are doing those things, but again, I can't see them, you know they can see me, but I can't tell, are they engaged, do they just have the computer on and their eating their dinner, you know, I can't tell their level of engagement the way I can with the students that are in front of me.

Another participant described the challenge she has experienced in monitoring students' discussions in the online environment:

> Um, the other piece is also just the monitoring piece, especially when you start to think of a class like Multicultural, where students, if they say something in a discussion post that needs to be addressed, then um, the teacher becomes responsible um, let's say I check posts at 10 o'clock, 10 am, you know I read over them and everything looks good and then at 10:30 someone posts something that could come across as derogatory or racist, um, but I didn't catch it until 4-hours later when the damage has been done, so in a classroom setting we can address that spot-on, you know talk through it, you know, tell us more about that or really

> go deeper with it, but online, it's almost like you want to um, almost, it's like you're checking to make sure that everything is okay, making sure that people are doing, doing what they're supposed to do or saying what they are supposed to say, almost like, I hate to say babysitting, I don't want you to right that down (laughing), but making sure that everyone's on-point you know.

Four other participants shared similar experiences where they found monitoring students in the online environment to be challenging.

Time-intensive. Five participants shared that they found the amount of time involved in the development and implementation of online counselor training to be a challenge. One participant described her experience related to the amount of time that she puts into online course development:

> One of the challenges that, especially because it's a summer class and is six weeks long, I feel like I have to have every bit of it ready before the term begins, um, and so, so it's a lot of work on the front-end before the class even starts.

Another participant described a similar experience of having to consider how much time she and her students must put into an online counselor training course:

> I think probably the biggest one is probably the timing and time-management, not just for me, but also for my students. It takes longer for me to plan an online class, even from week to week, than it does to plan an in-person class, so I've got to constantly have in the back of my mind, okay, how is this going to translate online, what is it going to look like when the students see it, um, how much time is it going to take the students, you know, great if they can see it, that's wonderful, but then how much time is it going to take for them to, you know, absorb the material, formulate their questions, put their questions out there, get a response back on their questions, um, and timing too on, if I'm not getting feedback from them fast enough, am I moving on when I need to be staying on a particular topic.

Three other participants all described similar experiences of finding the time intensiveness of developing and implementing online counselor training to be challenging.

Technically Challenging. Three participants described experiencing challenges with the technology involved in online counselor training. One participant described some specific challenges she has experienced with technology:

> Okay, it's like your overhead projector, Elmo here is hooked up to Blackboard so that, in theory, I would be able to use the overhead with my PowerPoint for the distance students to be able to see it, and in theory it sounds great. Halfway through the semester one of the students said, could you please slow down, the pages aren't loading fast enough. I'm like what do you mean they aren't loading fast enough? Well, they were typically 3 slides behind me because of how much time the Elmo was taking to load, so I very quickly learned, I can't use the Elmo. You know, if I want to show a progression of something, I'm going to have to use the Blackboard PowerPoint slides to show that. So those kinds of, of frustrations, uh, you know I really, when I'm given an opportunity to either teach online or not, I don't. It, I just feel so much more limited, and even last week, I had a technique I wanted to show the students, it was in a word document, I loaded my PowerPoint up and I was getting everything in the order that I wanted to be able to present it to the students and it wouldn't load my uh, Word document to Blackboard to use within that collaborate feature for the distance folks. Collaborate wouldn't handle it, so I ended up having to rethink the entire second half of my class. So you know, those are some of the kinds of frustrations, in the beginning and still periodically, I'm dealing with.

Another participant described how technical mishaps in the implementation of online counselor training can be disruptive to the learning process:

> Yea, and I think there are other kinds of things, you know, you get into the classroom, for me, if the system goes down, I have major problems, you know if I'm scheduled to do uh, I'm so bad with these terms, I think it's synchronous, where there's, yea, if I've got a synchronous activity planned and we go to do that and the university internet system is down, well now what do I do? Now I have to

> either say, you know, send an email message to everyone from my cell-phone saying, sorry guys, technology is not cooperating, you know, let's try and reschedule, which depending on how many students are in the class can be very difficult, or you just lose that time. You know, and I've had that happen every year that I've taught online, so, so yea, those are some of the things.

Educator-student Connection. Two Counselor Educators described challenging experiences in connecting with students. One participant described not feeling as connected with her online students as she does with her face-to-face students:

> I don't feel, I just don't feel as connected with my students in the online, I mean I do in some ways, like you know I remember they tell personal stories and you know I can talk to them about their stories, but um, the level of connectedness with my students is not quite as strong as it is in a face-to-face class.

Another participant described a similar experience of feeling like it has been a challenge to develop relationships and connections with students in the online environment.

Lack of Interpersonal Cues. Two participants described challenges related to the lack of interpersonal cues they have experienced while training counselors online. One participant stated:

> So in some of my face-to-face classes, you hear laughter, you hear people making plans to get together to study, you hear people talking about a test they took or something that happened in another class, I might see my students cry, they might cry in class sometimes because you know, they're stressed out or a topic touched their heart in one way or another and in the online class, you never hear laughter, um, I don't know if anyone's heart has been touched, I don't know if anyone is brought to tears by the topic we talk about. It feels like a much more, like when I'm listening to my students in my ethics class online, I picture them all wearing suits, you know they are very professional and they're very polite and kind and they reflect and the validate and they do all of those technical things that we do as

> counselors, but there's no laughter and there's no tears. Um, so that warmth of a physical connection is, is felt, it's absent.

Another participant described similar challenges in not being able to observe non-verbal communication as part of the process of training counselors in the online environment.

Logistically Difficult to Make Changes to a Course. Two participants described experiencing challenges making changes to courses once the course was active in the online environment. One participant shared her experience of having to go in and make changes to an online course:

> I definitely didn't do them in the first round of the course because I didn't know, uh, but I went and changed all the discussion boards because the discussion boards didn't match learning objectives, so I went through and I adapted all the discussion boards, I had no clue that when you change something in a weekly module and you change some in the actual, you go to the, click week 1 discussion board, you change it there, you also have to go to the discussion board, like, button, there's a discussion board forum and all 5 discussion boards are there, I had no clue, no clue, thought I had done everything, the course is copied to 26 different instructors, where I had added something to the discussion board, I had a student that emails me and says, uh Dr. (participant name), the discussion board here doesn't match here, which one should I use, and I was like well you use what's in the weekly module of course, and then I started getting emails from other students and emails from faculty and I'm like, oh this is a problem. Okay, here's our quick fix and then I had to end up, I got access to every instructor's course and ended up changing 5 weeks of discussion boards for them, so I went into 24 courses and changed the, that discussion board page because I didn't do it in the master-shell, so that was a challenge. The week 5, final instructions assignment, there was a piece missing, I forgot one word, qualitative. So I had to change the instructions, send the instructions back to all the course instructors and say, you can load this for yourself, if you don't know how to do it let me know and I'll go into your course and do it for you, and then I had to go behind the adjuncts to make sure they had done it, because my full-time campus faculty were pretty good about doing it because they understood this isn't in here, we can't hold students accountable for it, but going behind the adjuncts and by that time I

> knew who was going to do it and who wasn't going to do it, so it made it a little easier.

Another participant shared a similar story regarding making logistical changes to a course once it was active and students were participating in the course.

Night-time Teaching is Difficult. Two participants shared experiences of challenges related to teaching at night. One participant described feeling like a "shift worker" because of night-time teaching responsibilities:

> Uh, time, um, utilizing your time, so 8-5 is really like a downtime for me to do other things, um, so committee work for the university or my department, um, going into discussion boards, reading and prepping for class, my real work starts about, I guess like 4 o'clock, from 4 o'clock to maybe 9 o'clock, um, so if you think about a typical work day, I'm 8 o'clock to 9 o'clock at night is kind of my on-time, because my students will get out of work at 4 o'clock Central, so that's really 5 o'clock Eastern Standard Time, um, and so that's another thing, adjusting to another time zone, um, and student in different time zones, um, but you know, they get off work at 5 and they go online and start doing their work, so that's when I get the most questions, now yes I don't have to be online all the time, but I try to, especially if there is an assignment due or um we are starting a course, I try to be online kind of in that beginning, just to make sure that students get their questions answered and can do what they need to do. Um, I teach at night, so my 1-hour a week or my, I have 2-hour and a half groups, supervisions a week, that all happens at night, so that kind of, and 8 to 5 you still need to be there and present, um, but I've found myself shifting my time and how I orient my time, so if I'm going to be doing something, doing group supervision really late one night, maybe the next morning what I would do at night at home, like family responsibilities, I shift to the next morning. So it's kind of shifting the way you thing about time. Sometimes I feel like a shift-worker, and you know they talk about shift-workers syndrome and um, sometimes I feel that way.

Another participant shared his experience of questioning if counselor educators take as much of an intentional approach to teaching when they teach online in the evenings: "Are we doing it more at night when we are just trying to get through it or are

we doing it where we are sitting down and actually putting in the time and effort that is needed into it?"

Course Structure. The last category that emerged in this domain was the challenges participants faced related to the structure of online courses. Two participants shared challenges related to tiered systems of instructions at their institutions. One participant stated:

> So when I first took over the course it was school and mental health running together. Um, I had 26 sections, um, I taught 2 of those sections, that meant I had 24 other faculty members that were underneath, that were under me teaching the course, leading, teaching sections of the course. Um, of those 24 faculty members, over half, probably about 75% were actually adjunct instructors, um, so first piece, establishing communication with that many different instructors, um, was a challenge.

A second participant described a similar challenging experience in which she faced the added job responsibility of "managing multiple instructors".

Successes

The next domain that emerged included aspects of participants' experiences training counselors in the online environment that were positive or successful. Eight categories emerged within this domain: a) online learning is a good fit for a particular type of student, b) accessibility and flexibility, c) positive student feedback, d) student accountability, e) able to connect with students, f) high quality students, g) increased student-student interaction, and h) personally fulfilling.

Good Fit for Particular Type of Student. Six participants shared that through their experiences they had come to believe that online counselor training was a good fit

for a particular type of student. One participant shared her experience with at student that performed very well in online counselor training environment:

> I had one particular student that, her essays, her posts and her papers could have been mini-articles. Like little mini-articles, she would have an abundance of current references, they were integrated, you could just tell this student was just, um, really connecting everything. She went above and beyond in all her posts and papers and you could genuinely tell that she loved it. She would email me regularly for umm, conversation and she would also ask for, umm, periodic, like monthly phone calls and it was just so evident that the program was working for this woman and she was highly invested, um, and growing and it was just a miraculous, I mean that was just joyful, and so I usually end up with maybe a couple of those types of ideal online students, maybe once a year (laughing), it's pretty rare, um, so would that be a successful story

Another participant shared a story about a successful student in which the students age and lack of fear of technology made the student a good fit for online counselor training:

> I've given you so many negative images of um, I have had, you know I guess maybe I have had 1 or 2 positive moments. Um, the course that I'm teaching that part of the students are in the classroom and part of them are at a distance, um, we do classroom presentations and many of the distance students would actually figure out a way to get to campus the day they had to present. I had one young woman who was in (state), so it really wasn't an option to drive across 2 and a half states to do a presentation, and so she said, I'm just going to do it online, and you know, I set-up the permissions so that she would be able to control the Collaborate board and she just did a wonderful presentation, very engaging, she used some interesting tools I guess you would say throughout the presentation to engage her peers, it was probably the most uh, professionally done but yet fun and engaging in the 3 years that I've taught that class. This was last year I believe, um, but she was young, she had no fear of the technology, and she was able to just go in and play with it and she had a better mind for how is this going to look on a computer screen. Whereas so many of the students that I work with are you know, 30-plus and they don't always have the technology skills as those students that are just a few years younger than them. Um, it uh, but that was actually a positive experience. She had a, she did a great job, she had no problems with the

> technology, at the end of the presentation everyone is cheering for her that it went really well, um, the technology didn't fail us that evening, it just, everything came together that evening for that one presentation.

Other participants shared similar stories of students that went above and beyond the minimal requirements of the program. Three participants shared stories where they described successful students as the students who reached out to their Professors to connect and develop relationships.

Accessibility and Flexibility. Three participants described experiences related to the accessibility and flexibility of online counselor training for students and Counselor Educators. One participant described her experience of appreciating the flexibility the online format afforded her as a counselor educator and the accessibility it provided to her program:

> I appreciate the flexibility of um, of developing and implementing online learning because I, instead of knowing that every Tuesday at 5:30 to 9 I am in this classroom and teaching, I can decide, okay I'm busy on Tuesday so Sunday evening I'm going to go ahead and organize, um, organize everything on Blackboard so students can access it, I'm going to go ahead and open up an assignment, an activity for them to do, so it just provides flexibility in um, for the instructor and it also provides it for students. We cater to a variety of students, most of them work full-time and then are in school full-time, so for them to have um, a way of, let's say they want to get up early and stay up late, they can actually do that and not have to put their education on the back-burner for that, so I think that online gives them that, that ability to follow-through with their educational goals and as far as with tests, I usually give students a couple days to finish their tests, they only have 3 hours to complete it, but they could start that 3-hour block at any time within those 4 days, so then that speaks to the flexibility piece too, whereas in class if a student misses a class and we had a test that day, they miss the test and we have to go about figuring out how to make it up and things like that. So just kind of logistical things that make it positive.

Another participant described the convenience online courses provide to her students, but she also described her experience of students preferring face-to-face courses, but choosing to take online courses for the convenience they offer:

> We offer all of those different platforms of teaching, the face-to-face, hybrid, and online, um, it just adds to diverse types of instruction, which I think is good. It reduces some of the difficulty in our students' lives, they don't have to commute, they can take the online class at their leisure, they can schedule their timing when they want, you know I have hard deadlines, but they have 2 weeks to complete each deadline, so I think that flexibility that the online course offers sort of gives the students a break, um, I have students that do commute up to an hour and a half away from our campus, so you know, those particular students, what a great opportunity this online class gives them, um, but at the same time and this is really funny, you know my students and I talk about it, um, they do not want to take online classes, they are the least interested in a fully online class of all of our options, but at the same time, we offer the same class face-to-face, more students sign up for the online class than the face-to-face class, and they'll admit it, I like face-to-face better but this online works for my schedule, it's one less trip I have to take, and again, many of my students have families at home or their coaching or doing other things, so it does ease some degree of burden for them.

Positive Student Feedback. Three participants described experiences of receiving positive feedback from students that took their online courses. One participant shared that she experienced doubts about the quality of online learning before she began teaching online, but received positive feedback from her students that they enjoyed the online class.

> I really didn't think they would like it, you know, I have some, I mean I could be honest, I have some really um, judgmental thoughts about online, or I did, I did especially before I taught online, about the quality of the learning that would happen and um, so I, I use these um, so I have 12 modules and they, I have a little feedback survey, and anonymous feedback survey at the end of every module where they can give feedback on the components of it and, um, and year after year Daniel, they really like it, you know, and there's some things that haven't

> worked out, like I had some videos uploaded, um, you know, and they didn't stream well, it was too, the audio quality was bad, you know, there's those things, but for the most part, um, they've really enjoyed it and, and so I see the benefits for this class, um, where they are, most of them very entrusted in the DSM material, um, and with the narrated PowerPoint, hearing it coming to life and um, you know, being able to repeat them if they want to hear it again or go back, um, and play slides again they, they have really enjoyed that, it feels like enough of personalization of the material, um, and they get, I give them really thorough feedback on their written assignments.

The two other participants who shared experiences in this category had similar experiences of receiving positive feedback from students through formalized evaluations or conversations with the students after the classes were complete. One participant shared that her student evaluations for her online classes were often more positive than evaluations of her face-to-face classes.

Student Accountability. Three participants shared experiences related to student accountability in online counselor training. One participant shared her experience of online counselor training holding students to a higher degree of accountability in terms of understanding the course content:

> Well, I think, um, holding students accountable for really diving into the reading and the content, I think the online environment does very well, probably better than I can only say my land program, because they are accountable for writing essays and papers weekly, where my land program we don't do that, so I think the online environment might ultimately create better writers, better integrated writers, to where they can apply a lot more content knowledge, um, so I think that is a plus.

Two other participants shared similar experiences of students having to participate and produce more work, which created a higher degree of accountability.

Able to Connect with Students. Two participants shared experiences of being able to connect with their students in the online environment. One participant shared her experience of feeling like she was able to connect with students through asynchronous online presentations:

> You know, what comes to mind are, are things that the students repeat from those narrated PowerPoints, which, there, it's my voice on them obviously and um, but I don't, I don't replay them for myself every year so I forget things that I say on there (laughing) the smallest stuff sneaks in, you know, the repeat it, they bring things back up and um, and I think, I think it's a neat way for them to get to know me a little bit, even you know, through the recordings, you know, when they come to class they feel like they have a little bit of a relationship with me and they can make jokes about, you know I try to make jokes on the PowerPoints, nobody laughs of course because I'm just by myself recording (laughing) and so, I can hear me being kind of self-deprecating and I don't know, it makes me a little bit more approachable as a professor in the program, so that's, that's been nice.

Another participant described her experience of connecting with a student in supervision that was struggling with applying counseling skills in her sessions and being able to build a relationship with that student and help her work to improve her counseling abilities.

High Quality Students. Two participants shared experiences of having high quality students in their online classes. One participant stated:

> One thing I will add to that too, of course each of those examples may be the student's own personal endeavors or a lot of personality may come out through that too, um, but the great thing is that online programs are attracting people like that as well, so it's not that online programs are for this one certain population and again, if you want to get connected then do it on a residential program, no no no, but online programs attract those individuals too.

Another participant shared a similar experience of working with students she felt were high quality students.

Increased Student-student Interaction. Two participants shared experiences related to increased student-student interaction in online courses compared to face-to-face courses. One participant shared her experience of seeing more student-student interaction in an online class compared to when she taught that same class in a face-to-face format:

> When students used to present for Lifespan Development, used to present their um, their experiences and how it relates to the content, when we used to do that in-class, we didn't take time to ask questions so um, or even to, for students to say, you know, I really like the way that you um, told us a little bit about your um, private, how your cultural experiences were influenced by, I don't know, just kind of positive affirmation in-class, usually after a presentation we would clap and go on to the next person, like it wasn't any encouragement or affirmation, um, other than clapping for the most part, and of course I would provide feedback on the rubric, but the students weren't giving any kind of evaluation, but online um, with the smaller group that I spoke about earlier, they, since the presentations are uploaded, um, the students record themselves presenting the material and then upload it for everyone to see. After that, after students watch the video, of course it's a forum, a discussion board forum so they start to provide um, all kinds of affirmations, things like oh you're so courageous or I see your resiliency through your story, um, things that they wouldn't have had the opportunity to say, I'm sure I could redesign the way I do it in class, but I was just very excited to see the feedback, so there was more feedback from students, student-feedback toward students than when we were actually in class together.

Another participant shared a similar experience of the online format necessitating that students interact with each other more than they would in a typical face-to-face class.

Personally Fulfilling. Two Counselor Educators shared experiences personal fulfillment in training counselors online. One participant shared experiencing "moments of magic" in his online teaching: "There are these moments that when things happen,

when they work technology-wise, that you feel like you've pulled off magic, and in certain people's eyes that's what they see it as, that's magic." Another participant stated:

> I guess what I'm really, the main point I want to make here is that it's been very fulfilling to um, to just continually figure out okay, we need to change this and there are less and less of those which I think for me says, you know, we are seeing and we are being responsive to things that need to be changed, we continuously monitor, we regularly refresh other courses, and I know we are on the right track, so that gives me a lot of, um, you know, a lot of positive you know, or let me say it a different way, it gives me a lot of satisfaction.

Evolution of Teaching Online

The next to last domain that emerged from the data was related to participants' experiences of changing their approach to online counselor training over time. Six categories emerged within this domain: a) increased comfort-level with online teaching, b) increased collaboration with colleagues, c) more detailed explanations of assignments, d) increased interaction and discussion online, e) increased confidence that online counselor training is solidified. Each category will be described below.

Increased Comfort-level with Online Teaching. Five participants described experiencing an increase in their comfort-levels with online teaching over time. One participant shared her experience of initially feeling like she needed to have "fancy" online courses that used many different types of technology, but after teaching online she began feeling better about how she facilitated the online counselor training process:

> I feel more secure and less defensive about the way I have it set-up, you know, it's like the fancier ones on some level, it seems like I should be aspiring to that (laughing) and um, but the class is really good and it fits our program, it fits our purposes, the students say they are learning a lot, you know, I hate to um, it makes

> me feel more secure in what I have set-up even though it's not as flashy or as fancy as some of the other ones.

Another participant described experiencing a higher comfort level with providing online counselor training after having put "time in":

> I've been here at (institution name) for, this is my third year and uh, so I guess two and a half of those I've been teaching online and so, um, I would say time in is and maybe my own decreasing anxiety and increasing, um, comfort, lots of support, lots of great resources, um and then just what I said earlier about real investment, um and commitment to what I'm doing.

Three other participants described similar experiences of initially feeling somewhat uncomfortable about training counselors in the online environment, but experiencing increases in their comfort-levels after gaining experience.

Increased Collaboration with Colleagues. Two participants shared experiences of increased collaboration with colleagues over time. One participant shared her experience of increased collaboration with "tech experts" to help her bring idea to fruition:

> And with technology advancing like it is, and technology experts being more available, I think that will continue to grow. Because it's like we can come up with the ideas, but I could no more, I would never know how to make that happen, and so the collaboration between the ideas and then the tech experts that say, okay we can figure out how to make that happen, it's just a beautiful marriage (laughing).

Another participant shared experiences of sharing ideas and teaching strategies with colleagues in her program as they all gain experience training counselors in the online environment.

More Detailed Explanations of Assignments. Two participants shared their experiences of increasing the amount of detailed explanations for assignments in their online courses. One participant said:

> I think just the biggest evolution has been just the clarity and organization. I mean the first time I taught this class online, I previously taught it face-to-face, and I thought I would just use the same syllabus and that almost worked, but not quite. There were really some things I needed to be more specific about and I, it really showed me um, how much you know, that verbal piece in the classroom I had been relying on with my syllabi, so I didn't have that anymore with the online, so I tried to do a little open question answer about the syllabus, but what I found in the open question answer um, with the syllabus that wasn't tight enough was a lot of anxiety coming through and then that anxiety just kind of spilled into other students as well, like oh yea I didn't think of that, I'm worried about that too, so I stopped doing the question answer in the beginning, but instead changed into friendly introductions, because again I know they are in discussion forums together um, and I do group them for the forums, so there are only 5 to 7 people per discussion forum, um, so they can get to know each other, so I changed the beginning from lets go through the syllabus on the first day of class to let's get to know each other and here are some key components that you need to keep in mind with the syllabus, um, and really I would give them maybe 5 points or less, here are 5 key components and I would let them introduce themselves to each other and you know, I would introduce myself of course, and then after the introductions I followed up with some more detailed information about the syllabus and do you have questions. So I found that just kind of changing that to let's get to know each other and then get into the syllabus seemed to help a lot, but that anxiety piece is something I find I have to be more aware of with the online class, and the feel very overwhelmed in the beginning. They feel more, they seem to be more overwhelmed in the beginning in my online class than in my face-to-face class.

Another participant shared a similar experience of initially not giving detailed instructions and expectations of assignments: “I definitely have changed from assuming that students can read directions and understand what that means to recognizing I need to explain what, I need to explain expectations.”

Increased Interaction and Discussion Online. Two participants described increasing the levels of interaction and discussion in the online courses they develop and teach. One participant described the evolution of his teaching approach from relying on PowerPoint lectures early in his online teaching experience to the integration of a range of interactive teaching methods:

> My approach when I first started was, well we’ve got a book, it’s got 16 chapters, there are 16 weeks, I’m going to come up with 16 PowerPoints, um, that are essentially lecture of supplemental material around the content. Uh, it used to be just content, so it was a rehash of what was, you know, essentially what they have read in the textbook, so it became a review, then particularly it became more applied in the psychopath class, so it was more about treatment, so they were expected to read about the disorders, then I was going to talk about the treatment, and then they were going to, uh, they were going to show that in terms of treatment planning. And um, and now I think it’s, the outcome is I still want them to be able to do good treatment planning by the end of the psychopathology course, but it incorporates a lot more wiki, it incorporates a lot more discussion and even live discussion where people can talk about uh, the treatment plans as if they were having a staffing on them before doing them, so the shift has really been from delivering content to getting them to engage in more um, outcome, student learning outcomes that we would want them to have as part of the online.

Another participant shared a similar experience of evolving from a content-focused teaching approach to a more interactive and engaging way for teaching online.

Increased Confidence in Online Counselor Training. Two participants shared stories of experiencing increased confidence that online counselor training is solidified in the field. One participant stated:

> I believe online education really is much needed and it's likely not going anywhere for a long long time and so to be able and have the opportunity to learn and grow in that and to be a part of a team that is trying to do it at a high level, that's pretty exciting.

Another participant shared that her perception of online counselor training has evolved as she has experienced the value of being able to increase access to new student populations. She shared that the value of access, along with positive feedback from students, has solidified the value of online counselor training for her.

Use of More Creative Teaching Strategies. Two participants shared experiences of their approaches to online counselor training evolving to include more creative teaching strategies. One participant shared her experience of developing an online course that felt very "static", then evolving in her approach to course development to integrate more creativity:

> Well, the last course I was heavily involved in creating, is the leadership and advocacy course in school counseling that I provided on your list and that was, um, I was invited to be a content expert on that, and that's where I started to see a shift, because that program includes students creating a video and sending it to me, students doing simulation in a school, like they actually got tech people involved and created a virtual school, so the school counseling students interact with that virtual school and at the end of the course they actually have to do a presentation to a virtual schoolboard, on school counseling, so let's see, that course has been up and running now a couple of years, so I would have to say, from the very first time I engaged online learning, over 5 years ago, it has evolved now to really trying to be more virtually engaged.

Another participant described a similar experience of evolution in initially creating very discussion-based online courses, to now utilizing many forms of technology and enjoying the creative process of developing online courses.

Supports

The final domain that emerged from the data was relate to the various supports that participants had experience in developing and implementing online counselor training. The only category that emerged within two or more participants' experiences was the importance of institutional supports.

Institutional Support. All participants described aspects of their experiences involving institutional supports. Five sub-categories emerged within the institutional support domain: a) training, b) financial or course release, c) instructional design support, d) technology and space, e) technology assistance.

Training. Six participants described receiving training in online course development or online teaching at their institution. One participant described a training program at her institution that offered personalized training for the development of any course a faculty member developed:

> Um, yea so we, the university takes application annually for a um, a day-long workshop and it's called Quality Matters workshop and we um, if we are accepted to come to that workshop, we um get to talk a little bit about Blackboard and um, how we can create our shell and really just make the class look more inviting, um, also how we can organize the material, so all-day long we have an expert in the field come in and really talk with us and help with our individual courses and then they take that further by providing a grant for us, if we are able to align our class, um, our Blackboard page, if we align it with the way that we were taught in the workshop, and so they go into our class on Blackboard and take a look at it and if they see things that, um, don't quite align with what may be most effective then

> they let us know and we fix it, so we just keep tweaking it until um, it looks the way that we are taught to be helpful for students.

Another participant described receiving support through training opportunities at her institution, but lacking the time to complete the training program:

> Okay. Uh, we have a faculty center for teaching excellence and they sponsor an online training certificate every year, and you have to have departmental permission, so my department chair has to approve, you know, whoever is going to take the course. I got the approval, I signed up for the course, I started the course, the semester began and I had my own classes I had to work on because there was no course release, there was no time given to take this online course, you know, to do this online training and so now it's just sitting in a red folder on my desk waiting for me to get back to it. The training is there, but I'm finding it difficult to access it to that level because of time restrictions of my position.

A third participant also described having training for online teaching available at her institution, but she was unable to access the training because it was only offered face-to-face at her institution's campus: "So um, as far as training, there is training available, but again, it's on campus, so there's not an ability for us to get online training in course development and the things that we need." Three other participants described receiving various forms of training at their academic institution to help with the course development process or to learn new technological tools.

Financial Incentive or Course Release. Five participants shared experiences of financial support or a course release to develop an online counselor training course. One participant shared his experience of feeling financially supported by his institution, as long as the financial support could be justified:

> Um, you know in terms of financial support, you know I think um, we, anything that we really have needed has been there, every, even down to the faculty needs that we've had, if we can justify that, it's been there, so I think that that level of support is high.

Another participant shared her experience of receiving financial support to purchase technology she believed would enhance her online teaching:

> I just applied for a grant and they provided $1000 to um, purchase technology that could help um, that could help me in my teaching and online learning. There is a device called the Swivel and what it does is, it follows, it's a device that sites on the desk and then the instructor wears a small device that the other one can kind of speak to and for instance if I'm teaching a class in person, it can record that entire lecture and then I can upload that lecture into my online class so that they can get that same experience, so it works really well if the teacher is teaching 2 courses at the same time, but one of them is online and one of them is in-person, because you can use your lecture to um, make sure that the online folks get the same information, and it also gives them opportunity to hear the questions that other students might ask and get those answered too. So there's support out there to make it great.

Participants also described receiving support through course releases to develop online counselor training courses. One participant described that receiving a course release helped her navigate the unfamiliar world of online teaching before she taught the course for the first time:

> Yea well that initiative when I first started to develop some online classes provided a course release and that initiative is long gone, but it, I, I was hired at the final sort of window for that and my understanding, the rationale for this support, which was crucial for me, is that the faculty had, were like me, they were in school before there were online classes, even in grad school, so there was very little, kind of, knowledge about how to do it, how to do it well, why would you want to do this, except for convenience, which to many people, myself included, felt like a, a, letting go of some quality, uh, which I'm reluctant to do in counselor education so this initiative gave a course release and access to workshops and

> training on, you know, how to develop online classes, and, and the course release gave time too, just time to for me to try things and um, and mess up, and you know, then try it again before the students needed the class, um, and so that was essential to get it going.

Two participants shared that receiving a course release was not a part of their experience of institutional support. One participate described her frustration at not receiving a course release:

> At our institution, unless you're developing an online undergraduate course, there are no course releases to do that development, so for our master's level students, if we want to provide them with some kind of online course, we have to find the time to do it on our own because we are not going to get a course release to help with that, that's been a little frustrating.

Instructional Design Support. Three participants shared receiving instructional design support at their institutions. One participant described the instructional design support she received and the time it saved her in developing online counselor training courses:

> I have been greatly helped by having instructional designers, you know, to work with me and help with the technical aspects, so that's really been an awesome time saving, um, of course that's very expensive so, you know, that's um, an element of the online world that comes into play that while campus face-to-face learning is expensive in some ways as well, the online folks are definitely paying for that technology and for that convenience of technology and technology-based learning and so um, so you know students are paying for it and it certainly is expensive, I don't know, I'm not privy to that information, but I just, I generally can know that those folks, that company's services are not free and so, but um, so costly as they are, it's no longer technically costly to me in that way. Um, I still have a great amount of time, and so, I still have a great amount of time involved in terms of organizing content, um, finding, organizing um, that's just with an initial course set-up, you know, then after the course is taught, each time we um, we are each tasked with refreshing the course, making sure that um, material

> doesn't need to be changed, links don't need to be updated, you know there are those kinds of upkeep um, maintenance activities and so I would say again, from what was technically and time, uh, technically and time consuming, um, now here we have help and that's amazing, that's great, and still though there's a lot of time involved, it's very time consuming, uh, but not nearly as time consuming as if I were trying to do it on my own, so that's the upside of that.

Two other participants shared similar experiences of receiving institutional support in the form of collaboration with instructional design personnel.

Technology and Space. Two participants shared experiences where they did not receive institutional support in the form of technology and space. After sharing that she struggled to create a workspace for herself at her home, one participant said "I think on-campus institutions, having the technology and the space to be able to facilitate having online faculty, and prepping for that is important." Another participant shared that she felt like institutions that offer online education should help faculty members acquire the technology and space needed to effectively facilitated online counselor training.

Technology Assistance. Two participants described their experiences of receiving institutional support in the form of technology assistance. One participant stated:

> What I end up having to do is call Blackboard service and say, um, well for example, sometime today I've got to call Blackboard services and say, okay I've figured out how to create an anonymous survey within Blackboard to give to my students, how do I look at the results, and somebody will have to walk me through. I can see that students have taken it, but I can't get the results, so they're going to have to take time to teach me that, and that's how most of my training for the online here at this institution has been done. You know, they tell you just get online and see what happens and then you call them every time you discover a problem. Now we do have a great IT department and they're, they've been very

> uh, very responsive when I call and say, I have this specific problem, what's the resolution for that?

Another participant shared a similar experience of receiving support in the form of quick technological assistance when a problem arose in her online counselor training course.

Rare Categories

Categories that emerged within one participant's experience are listed in the table below.

Table 4

Domains, Rare Categories, Participant

Domains	Rare Categories	Participant
Teaching philosophy	Students must work to understand content	4
	Students have the capacity to learn	6
	Learning should be pragmatic and active	7
	Developmental	8
	Experiential	6
Relational practice	Students are less likely to see out relationships with educators online	1
	Having safe spaces where students and educators can share is important	5

	Educators can use counseling skills to facilitate student learning	6
	Taking an online class as a student increases educator's empathy for students	6
	Self-monitored discussions	7
	Continuous educator-student interaction	7
	All students must participate in online learning	7
	Using technology to access resources can prepare students for work in the field	9
	Sense of community in online learning is vital	9
Translating teaching into the online environment	Integrating students' experiences into their learning is difficult online	8
	Supervision requires a different approach online	7
	Teaching online has not been difficult	7
	Teaching philosophy should not be modality-specific	6
	Teaching that takes place face-to-face should	4

	necessitate face-to-face interaction	3
	Technologies allow for a direct translation of some face-to-face teaching approaches into the online environment	7
	There are aspects of online teaching that can be translated to face-to-face teaching	8
	There are aspects of training counselors that cannot be done effectively online	9
	There are financial barriers to utilizing some online tools	
Online impact on course development and implementation	Online courses are more intentionally tied to accreditation standards	1
	Content heavy courses are more appropriate for the online environment	3
	Instructors teaching different sections of the same course have to be monitored continuously	7
	Online education can stifle educator creativity	9
	Online educators are challenged with being technology experts	3

	Some aspects of courses have to be given up with teaching online Students don't expect to be active learners in online courses	3 9
Personal adjustment to teaching online	Anxious about teaching online Challenged by new course management system Frustration with online faculty meetings Frustration with technology support Insecure about not knowing how to use advanced technologies Is this the new normal? Learned to have patience with students Acceptance of the limitations of technology Felt unprepared to teach online Overwhelmed by the amount of option in online teaching	3 8 7 4 3 2 3 8 9 5
Challenges	Addressing student concerns	1 6

	Clearly explaining assignments	2
	Collaborating with support staff who are not counselor educators	3
	Co-teaching online with doctoral students	2
	Difficult to teach an online course someone else developed	2
	Expensive to develop online courses	2
	Lack of immediacy	8
	Lack of positive experiences with online learning	7
	Lack of voice in faculty meetings	9
	Limited by technology that is available at institution	1
	Modeling counseling skills online	4
	Promotion and tenure	4
	Proprietary nature of content developed for online courses	9
	Student lack of online learning experience	9
	Student resistance to online learning	1

	Variety of teaching strategies	
Successes	Able to apply experiences as a student to online teaching Able to make changes to meet student needs Intentional structuring of courses	6 7 2
Evolution of teaching online	Adjusting to decrease students' time commitment Backwards designing of courses Enjoys being ahead of the curve with technology Makes adjustments based on student feedback Shifted from content-focus to meaning-making Shifted responsibility of content consumption to students Struggles with fully-online counselor training Integrated new technologies as they become available.	8 4 4 6 7 4 1 4
Supports	CACREP	6 2

	Confidence of administration Lack of recognition for online teaching in promotion and tenure process Technology downtime for maintenance	4 7

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

Researchers have shown that training counselors is a multi-faceted process that involves facilitating the development of cognitive complexity, reflective practice, and the counseling skills necessary to facilitate the helping relationship (Corey et al, 1993; Giovannelli, 2003; Ivey, 1994). However, little is known about how Counselor Educators are developing and delivering these processes within online environments. Given this gap of knowledge, the purpose of the current study was to better understand the experiences of Counselor Educators who had developed and delivered online counselor training. The Consensual Qualitative Research (CQR) methodology was utilized to facilitate a rigorous exploration and analysis of participants' experiences. The current body of research related to online counselor training consists of empirical studies of narrowly-focused aspects of counselor training and conceptual explorations of legal and ethical issues. Therefore, this study sought to contribute to the body of knowledge about how Counselor Educators are developing and delivering online counselor education. In this chapter, discussion of the results, implications for Counselor Educators and counselor education programs, limitations of the study, and directions for future research will be discussed.

Discussion of the Results

Nine Counselor Educators participated in interviews to collect data related to their experiences of developing and delivering online counselor training. Nine domains

emerged in the data analysis process. A tenth domain was developed for data that did not fit into one of the other nine domains. Each domain contained between two and eight categories. Frequency labels of *general*, *typical*, *variant*, or *rare* were applied to each category based on the number of participants that shared experiences that fit into that category. The study generated two *general* categories and seven *typical* categories, which indicate that there were common experiences in developing and delivering online counselor training among the sample. The primary research question and sub-questions are presented below, followed by an exploration of the findings and their relationship to the extant literature.

Research Questions

What are the experiences of Counselor Educators who develop and deliver online counselor training?

a. How do Counselor Educators describe their experiences of translating their teaching philosophy and practice into the online environment?
b. How do Counselor Educators describe the successes and challenges they have experienced in developing and delivering online counselor training?
c. How do Counselor Educators describe their experiences of support in developing and delivering online counselor training?

Exploration of Findings

The overall results of the current study indicate that there are commonalities among Counselor Educator's experiences of developing and delivering online counselor training. The objective of qualitative research is not to generalize findings to a larger

population. However, the CQR methodology utilizes frequency counts to identify patterns across cases (Hill et al., 2005). The frequency counts that emerged in the cross-analysis process of this study indicated two *general* categories and seven *typical* categories. These categories indicate that there were common experiences around support for online Counselor Educators, facilitating counselor training in the online environment, and characteristics of students that are successful in learning through the online medium.

Support. The most common category that emerged was institutional support, which included five sub-categories. All participants in this study indicated that institutional support played a central role in their experiences of developing and delivering online counselor training. Institutional support has been identified as a vital aspect of effectively implementing quality online education (Fish & Wickerman, 2009) and this was supported in the current study by all participants. One fundamental institutional support discussed in the available literature is the importance of providing training for faculty on the available technologies that may be used for online instruction and how to integrate those technologies into an online course (Christi & Garrote Jurado, 2009; Deggs et al., 2010; Yoo & Huang, 2013). Six participants in this study discussed participating in or being offered training on online teaching at their institution, with mixed reports regarding their ability to access these trainings and the utility of these trainings.

Three participants reported positive experiences of receiving training for online teaching at their respective institutions. Interestingly, all three of these participants were employed at public institutions, which is the institutional category that is growing most

rapidly in the utilization of online education (Allen & Seaman, 2015). These participants found the trainings their institutions provided to be helpful in their transitions into the online educational environment and accessible enough that they were able to take advantage of the training opportunities. Given that most educators have never participated in online learning as a student or received formal preparation for online teaching (Chen & Looi, 1998; Christie & Garrote Jurado, 2009), it is concerning that only one-third of participants in this study found training at their institution to be helpful and accessible. Based on the reports of these Counselor Educators, it appears worth considering the content and availability of trainings offered at institutions engaged in online counselor training.

Conversely, not all participants had positive experiences with the trainings offered at their institutions. One participant described the training offered as being too basic and only covering the organizational aspects of her institution's course management system. Although training on course management systems can be helpful, this participant's experience suggests that training should also address more complex aspects of online teaching, such as various technological tools that can be used to facilitate different types of learning. These might include training on tools such as synchronous audio/video-conferencing software, which have been shown to facilitate cognitive complexity and group decision-making skills (Chen et al., 2005; Giesbers et al., 2014; Oztok et al., 2013), or asynchronous tools such as blogs, microblogs, and wikis, which have been show to allow for deeper levels of reflection and in-depth critical thinking (Huang & Hsiao, 2012).

Two participants shared that their institutions offered trainings for online teaching, however the participants' personal preferences for learning face-to-face prevented them from engaging in these trainings, which were offered exclusively online. These two participants were both required by their institutions to engage in online counselor training and their decisions not to participate in trainings because of the online medium raises several questions. If a Counselor Educator has not had positive learning experiences online or does not feel that she or he can learn well in an online environment, their ability to develop and deliver online counselor training is suspect. Similarly, if a Counselor Educator has strong preferences for face-to-face learning, how might this influence their approach to structuring their courses or their level of engagement in the courses they deliver online? Participants were not asked how their personal learning preferences interact with their teaching modality, so no inferences can be made from these discrepancies, but these findings raise interesting questions.

One participant shared that her institution offered training, but the training was time-intensive and she was not able to attend the training due to other job responsibilities. Ironically, one participant shared that her institution offers training in online teaching, however the training was only offered in a face-to-face format at the institution's physical campus. This participant lived at a distance from her institution which prevented her from being able to access these trainings. It seems logical that an institution that offers online courses to its students would in-turn offer online training to its faculty members, yet this is not the case at all institutions. Researchers have presented several models of online teaching training, such as the Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, and

Evaluation (ADDIE) model (Allen, 2006) or the Kirkpatrick model (Kirkpatrick, 1994). However, these models do not address the accessibility of training for faculty, so this finding was surprising and might be an added consideration for institutions that employ distance-educators.

Another facet of institutional support that was identified by the majority of participants was financial or course release incentives for developing and/or delivering online counselor training (n=5). Two participants described receiving financial support for purchasing technology that helped with the development and delivery of online counselor training. Participants were not asked directly about the technology provided by their institutions, however only one participant described that the technology provided was inadequate for developing and facilitating online counselor training. This is an encouraging finding given that investment in appropriate technologies has been found by researchers to directly contribute to the quality of online education (Dykman & Davis, 2008; Orr et al., 2009).

In addition to financial incentives, three participants reported that course releases, or lack thereof, as an important element of their experiences. Two participants shared their frustration that they were asked to develop online counselor training courses without course releases and only one participant shared that she had received a course release. The participant who received a course release worked for a public institution and reported that the funding for online course development is no longer offered to faculty. Researchers have reported that developing courses for the online environment is more time-intensive than developing traditional courses (Allen & Seaman, 2013). This held

true for the current study, as the time-intensity of developing and delivering online counselor training was the second most common challenge in participants' experiences (n=5). Given that all participants reported that they had developed at least one online counselor training course, this suggests that many participants engaged in a more time-intensive course development process without receiving a needed institutional support in the form of a course release. Future researchers, should explore in greater depth the role that time for preparation of online courses plays in the effectiveness of this modality for training counselors.

The three other sub-categories of the institutional support category were instructional design support (n=3), technology and space (n=3), and technology assistance (n=2). Three participants reported that they received instructional design support from their institutions as they developed online counselor training courses. Instructional design has been found to be one of the most essential skills for online teaching since many teaching strategies that are utilized in traditional classrooms might not directly translate into the online environment (Hirumi, 2004). Given the importance of instructional design, it is concerning that only one-third of participants in the current study reported receiving this critical support. Interestingly, one participant who reported receiving instructional design support described the challenge of working to build a counselor training course with instructional designers who were not counselors. She talked about the cooperative learning that was necessary as the instructional designers taught her about online course design and she taught them about the types of learning she was trying to facilitate for counselors-in-training.

Three participants also described technology and space as an aspect of their experience of developing and delivering online counselor training. Investment in technology has been described as an essential aspect of meeting the needs of online teachers and learners (Finney, 2004; Orr et al., 2009; Schroeder, 2001). Two participants reported receiving financial incentives to purchase technology for their online teaching. However, one participant described being denied funding for purchasing software she felt would be helpful in her online course. Additionally, one participant described an interesting challenge of trying to create a space in her home that was conducive to facilitating online counselor training. These experiences indicate the technology provided to Counselor Educators and the spaces to facilitate online counselor training are important considerations for counselor training programs and Counselor Educators as they plan and implement online counselor training courses.

Technical support has been found to be a major contributor to the success of online learning (ADEC, 1999; Reushle & Mitchell, 2009; Yoo & Huang, 2013). Curiously, only two participants in the current study mentioned technical support as an important part of their experiences developing and delivering online counselor training. Both reported their institutions offered technical support that had been helpful as issues came up for them or their students during the implementation of a course. One participant described feeling this support reduced the pressure she felt to be a technology expert. Another participant said that the technical support at her institution was very helpful, but only operated during traditional business hours, which limited her access to immediate technical assistance during her night class. The current study did not aim to explore any

particular aspect of support, however the emphasis on technical support in the literature, along with the scarcity of technical support in participants' experiences, warrants further investigation.

Together, support emerged as the most commonly discussed aspect of participants' experiences, indicating that support is critical for online Counselor Educators. Unfortunately, participants reported lack of supports or barriers to accessing supports as often as they described receiving support. The types of supports that participants described have been shown to be critical aspects of providing effective online education (ADEC, 1999; Allen & Seaman, 2013; Chen & Looi, 1998; Christie & Jurado, 2009; Deggs et al., 2010; Dykman & Davis, 2008; Finney, 2004; Hirumi, 2004; Mason & Weller, 2000; Orr et al., 2009; Reushle & Mitchell, 2009; Schroeder, 2001; Yoo & Huang, 2013) and merit continued investigation going forward.

Training Counselors Online. It appears that individuals' motivation to engage training opportunities, whether formal or informal, influenced participants' transition into online teaching. Five participants described their personal high levels of motivation to learn new technologies as a factor that eased their transition into online counselor training. There is often a learning curve for faculty members in understanding the available technologies and learning to effectively integrate these technologies into online educational experiences (Chen & Looi, 1998; Christie & Jurado, 2009, Mason & Weller, 2000; Schrum & Benson, 2002). The participants who described a personal motivation to learn new technologies experienced the learning curve as an exciting opportunity to grow as educators, which eased their transition into online counselor training. This finding

suggests that Counselor Educators' personal motivations to learn about new technologies might be an important variable that influences the ease with which an individual makes the transition into the online modality. Future researchers might explore in greater depth the relationship between faculty members personal comfort with and eagerness to learn about technology and the role this plays in their engagement with online instruction. It is worth noting that the majority of participants (n=5) described increased comfort-levels with online teaching over time, suggesting that the initial learning curve and the accompanying difficulties were temporary.

Participants in the current study described various aspects of their approach to teaching and their experiences related specifically to training counselors in an online environment. When teaching adults, it is important that educators are able to articulate their approach to learning so that they can inform adult learners how a particular learning experience will be approached (Knowles et al., 2013). Participants in this study were asked to describe their personal philosophy of teaching as a precursor to discussing their experiences of translating those philosophies into the online context. The teaching philosophy that was identified most frequency was Constructivism (n=3). In addition to the three participants who explicitly named Constructivism, three participants believed that educator-student interaction is essential in helping counselors-in-training integrate content knowledge with their personal experiences. This is a central tenant of the Constructivist teaching philosophy (Merriam & Bierema, 2013).

Interestingly, Constructivism is often described in the literature as a philosophical approach well aligned with how adults naturally learn and with the self-directed nature of

online learning (Garza-Mitchell, 2009; Paurelle, 2003). Constructivism has also been presented in counselor training literature as an approach that challenges students to engage in a process of discovery, consideration, questioning, integrating, and evaluating information, which is a process they will continue to utilize in their counseling work as they encounter new clients and situations (Nelson & Neufeldt, 1998). Therefore, six participants in the study reported aspects of their teaching philosophy that have been described as aligning well with the processes of online teaching and training counselors.

By contrast, when participants described their experiences of translating their teaching philosophies and practices into the online environment, more than half described barriers in their ability to effectively utilize Constructivist principles. Almost all participants (n=8) described difficulty in facilitating the interpersonal aspects of teaching that allow them to help students process and integrate content and experience. Participants attributed this difficulty in interpersonal processing to the diminished or non-existence of non-verbal communication, present-moment interactions and immediacy in online interactions. These types of communication discrepancies between face-to-face and online interpersonal interactions are often described as "transactional distance" in the online education literature (Dennen, Darabi, & Smith, 2007; Moore & Kearsley, 2012).

Although researchers have found online synchronous tools to closely resemble face-to-face interactions (Chen et al., 2005; Giesbers et al., 2014; Huang & Hsiao, 2012; Oztok et al., 2013), participants in the current study discussed a lack of these types of interactions with students or experienced these interactions as having lower quality due to the diminished availability of interpersonal cues through the online medium. That

participants reported this concern is not completely surprising, as Sorlie et al. (1999) found that counseling supervisors reported reduced eye contact and fewer non-verbal cues in their online supervision interactions, as well as an increased reliance on verbal communication. To date, however, there have been no investigations to explore how changes in interpersonal communication patterns unfold and impact online counselor training outside of clinical supervision. Based on the experiences of Counselor Educators in the current study, future researchers should explore this complex question as it appears to be a central concern for those who train counselors online.

It appears likely that Counselor Educators are interested in nuanced interpersonal interactions between and with students to a degree that educators in other disciplines are less concerned about. For example, participants described a need to go beyond content knowledge development in their courses and a desire to reach their students on levels beyond the intellect. One participants gave a vivid description of the contrast she experienced between face-to-face teaching and online teaching:

> In some of my face-to-face classes, you hear laughter, you hear people making plans to get together to study, you hear people talking about a test they took or something that happened in another class, I might see my students cry, they might cry in class sometimes because you know, they're stressed out or a topic touched their heart in one way or another and in the online class, you never hear laughter, um, I don't know if anyone's heart has been touched, I don't know if anyone is brought to tears by the topic we talk about. It feels like a much more, like when I'm listening to my students in my ethics class online, I picture them all wearing suits, you know they are very professional and they're very polite and kind and they reflect and the validate and they do all of those technical things that we do as counselors, but there's no laughter and there's no tears. Um, so that warmth of a physical connection is, is felt, it's absent.

For Counselor Educators who value interpersonal relationships and "warmth" in their connections with students, the online environment appears to have a cool-down affect that diminishes the quality of connection with students. At this point, it is unclear how this this lack of connection might be influencing Counselor Educators' engagement or students' learning in online counselor training, and this question deserves further investigation.

One factor that may have contributed to participants reporting a lack of connection with students was the fact that a third (n=3) reported a heavy reliance on discussion boards as a primary means for communication. Discussion boards, which are typically asynchronous text-based teaching tools, have been shown to facilitate high levels of in-depth reflection and critical-thinking (Huang & Hsiao, 2012). Discussion boards have also been shown to produce lower-levels of presence among educators and students than more interactive and engaging teaching methods, such as synchronous chat-based methods (Nowak & Biocca, 2003). However, there is research available that has explored the connection educators and students develop when discussion boards are the primary means of communication. Participants in the current study did not describe their rationale for heavy discussion board usage, yet it was evident that this technological tool caused participants to experience a lower-level of connection with their students than they desired. One participant described her experience of being bored with communicating through discussion boards and felt that her connections with students were overly content-driven:

> The online program that I teach for, even though they are trying to do that more, give a variety of, it's still very much the weekly discussions, the weekly paper and I feel bored as an instructor so I have to believe the students are somewhat bored with the monotony of it, um, and I can feel that, and I have talked to my mentors and colleagues about that, I can feel them just going through the motions, instead of really digging in to their own development, it's just me, it's having that variety of experience that shifts online away from just that static, content relationship.

This theme of challenges with connecting to students was also discussed in terms of monitoring and assessing students' learning (n=6). Participants expressed the need to assess student learning holistically, not simply by what a student was able to communicate in a discussion post or paper. Yet, participants found it challenging to incorporate or facilitate the types of interactions with students in the online environment that allowed this type of monitoring to take place. This raises concerns about the interactions that can occur between educators and students in online counselor training courses, however it frames these concerns through a learning outcomes lens. Training students to become professional counselors is more complex than simply transferring knowledge about the counseling process and profession. Students must demonstrate self-awareness, application of knowledge through demonstrated practice, and interpersonal skills such as presence, acceptance, and genuineness (Nelson & Neufeldt, 1998). The challenges that participants described in interacting with and monitoring of counselors-in-training suggests that researchers should explore mechanisms for facilitating and assessing these complex teaching and learning processes in online environments.

Issues related to effectively interacting with and monitoring students learning of counseling skills appears to be the central challenge when transitioning the training of

professional counselors into the online environment. The physical distance between Counselor Educators and counselors-in-training was described by participants as creating relational distance in the teaching and learning processes. There is evidence in the broader online education literature that synchronous teaching methods produce interactions similar to those of face-to-face interactions (Oztok et al., 2013). Nevertheless, the findings of the study raise the questions of the effectiveness of online tools, whether they be synchronous or asynchronous, for capturing the interpersonal nuances experienced face-to-face. The missing interpersonal elements that were identified when communicating through an online medium appeared to the participants interviewed to significantly reduce the quality of connection between educators and students and ultimately, the quality of learning that took place in the subjects on online courses.

Student-fit for the Online Environment. Surprisingly, when participants were asked what successes they had experienced in providing online counselor training, the most common theme that identified was not related to particular teaching strategy or technological tool. Rather, participants described a particular type of student that thrived in the online environment (n=6). This was true for participants at both public and private institutions. These students were typically termed highly motivated individuals who went above and beyond in their class assignments, and who actively reached out to connect with instructors. The first two characteristics might describe successful students in any environment, however there is evidence that the online environment is particularly well-suited for adult learners who have intrinsic motivation to learn (Chen, 2012; Kenner &

Weinerman, 2011; Knowles at al., 2013). Yet, this fact, also suggests that students who are less independent, motivated and engaged may also be less successful in online counselor training programs. The importance of students who made the effort to reach out to and connect with educators has unique meaning when placed within the context of the general lack of educator-student connection that participants in the current study reported.

It appears that the educator-student connection was a formative factor that influenced how participants experienced their interactions with counselors-in-training as challenging or successful. Due to the fact that participants' online interactions with counselors-in-training were described as being of diminished interpersonal quality, supplemental interactions initiated by a student outside of basic class interactions appears to have establish the type of relationships that fostered successful learning. One participant described a student who reached out to her on a weekly basis and asked questions, set-up face-to-face meetings outside of class to discuss content she was struggling with, and checked-in to follow-up on feedback. The participant shared that she offered to meet with any student outside of class, but very few took advantage of that offering.

The issue of a counselor-in-training needing to take the initiative to connect with a Counselor Educator outside of class to establish a connection raises several questions. What is it about having additional one-on-one interactions with counselors-in-training that causes Counselor Educators to view those experiences as successful? They described using the same online technologies to communicate with students in supplemental

interactions, so does the interaction frequency or the one-on-one format of those interactions change the quality of connection? Participants had attributed the lower quality of interaction to reduced or non-existent non-verbal communication, so what makes the one-on-one interactions different? Are they able to pay more attention to non-verbal communication in those interactions or does the simple fact that a student took initiative to reach out change the Counselor Educator's perspective of the student? These are questions that future researchers should explore in greater depth. In particular, the question of how Counselor Educators who training counselors in the online environment can establish a positive working relationship with their students.

Clearly, participants struggled to connect with their counselors-in-training within the context of online classroom interactions, yet were able to enjoy higher quality interactions in one-on-one online formats. One approach to addressing this issues is to intentionally structure courses so that the types of interactions that lead to successful learning experiences are encouraged or required. Several participants described that it would be helpful if they were able to connect with all students one-on-one, but thought it is unrealistic to make this a requirement due to the time-commitment involved for both their students and themselves. One participant described this time dilemma:

> I think the barrier, one, I think there's a couple of barriers. One is time, I mean honestly I could require that I speak to the students at least twice in a term by phone, I could do that. It's not required in the course, but probably with academic freedom, I could require it. I know that some instructors do a conference call in the beginning of the term, um, and I know for me it's not so much that I resist that, but I know it's time and I know that their schedules are so, all over the place, and I think of my god, how would we ever find a time for all of us to either have a conference call or for me to actually have a phone conversation with every single

> one of them. Especially if I have 15 or 20 in a class and I have a couple of sections.

Further investigation is needed to explore ways that Counselor Educators can make these types of successful connections the norm in online counselor training.

Despite the challenges participants experienced in connecting with counselors-in-training in the online environment, eight out of nine participants rated their experiences with online counselor training as very effective or somewhat effective. This suggests that participants were able to effectively facilitate learning processes without the types of interpersonal exchanges they were used to in the traditional educational environment. It is worth noting that the participant that rated their experience with online counselor training as very ineffective was the only participant that worked for a private for-profit institution. Given this discrepancy, more research is needed to understand how different types of educational institutions are developing and delivering online counselor training.

Summary

This study contributes to the body of literature on online counselor training by providing an initial exploration of the experiences of Counselor Educators who are developing and delivering that training. Participants shared a range of experiences as they transitioned into training counselors in the online environment. Although all participants' experiences were unique, there were commonalities that suggest that support, educator-student connection, and student-fit for learning in an online setting play important roles in online counselor training.

Limitations

The researcher in this study attempted to provide an unbiased representation of Counselor Educators' experiences of developing and delivering online counselor training. Steps were taken to ensure rigor in research methodology and the trustworthiness of the results. However, limitations must be taken into account when considering the findings of this study. Limitations that warrant consideration are researcher bias, sample homogeneity, and lack of triangulation of the data.

Trustworthiness is always a consideration in qualitative research and the CQR methodology utilizes several methods to limit biases and assumptions (Hill et al., 1997; Hill et al., 2005). This study utilized a research team, a bracketing process, and an external auditor to ensure the trustworthiness of data analysis. The three research team members were all actively involved in the data analysis process and contributed significant amounts of time to the study. However, the primary researcher took the lead throughout because the study served as his doctoral dissertation. This resulted in the primary researcher conducting the interviews and leading the data analysis process. Multiple trustworthiness measures were utilized to limit the bias of data interpretation, however the primary researcher, who is enthusiastic about online teaching, may have had more influence on the data analysis than other research team members.

Hill et al. (2005) suggested a sample size of 8-15 participants for a study that utilizes one to two-hour interviews. The current study had a sample of nine Counselor Educators who were or had recently taught at least one online counselor training course. The small sample size utilized in the CQR methodology limits the generalizability of the

results. One of the risks of having a smaller sample size is the heterogeneous nature of the sample, which can produce inconsistent results (Hill et al., 2005). The data analysis of this study resulted in only two *General* categories and seven *Typical* categories, suggesting that the sample might have been too heterogeneous. Future studies of this nature might benefit from targeting a more homogeneous sample. For example, either targeting Counselor Educators that work for a traditional counselor training program that offers a few online courses or Counselor Educators that work for fully online counselor training programs.

Finally, this study utilized self-report of experiences as its sole source of data. Interviews were conducted to gain a depth of understanding about participants' experiences developing and delivering online counselor training. The primary researcher conducted all of the interviews and his enthusiasm for the subject matter might have influenced participants' representations of their experiences. The data that participants provided might also have been limited by their self-awareness or personal biases toward the subject matter. Inclusion of other data sources for triangulation in future studies could help ensure the trustworthiness of future results.

Implications for Online Counselor Training

The findings from the current study have implications for counselor training programs and Counselor Educators engaged in online counselor training. As the development and delivery of online counselor training continues to grow, counselor training programs will be faced with myriad decisions regarding online counselor training course offerings. The results of the current study indicate several areas counselor training

programs should consider and raise questions regarding aspects of online counselor training that warrant further inquiry.

One of the first decisions a counselor training program must make after deciding to engage online counselor training is what course or courses to offer in the online format. The current study did not aim to investigate decision-making processes around course offerings, however participants had developed and delivered a variety of different online courses and one participant described the online format as being more suitable for content-focused courses. Counselor training programs might consider factors such as the balance of content and skill development in courses, frequency and structure of educator-student and student-student interaction, and whether synchronous or asynchronous formats will allow the types of interactions that facilitate learning objectives for a given course. Further research is needed to better understand how counselor training programs are approaching the decision-making processes around online course offerings.

Counselor training programs that decide to offer on online courses, should be strategic in supporting Counselor Educators who develop and deliver these courses. Counselor Educators tend to have multiple roles across the range of teaching, research and service requirements in addition to clinical or consultation practices; therefore, trainings should be practical, accessible, and feasible to complete. Trainings should address components of teaching philosophy, online instructional design, and online teaching tools so that Counselor Educators are able to intentionally approach the online course development process with the knowledge and skills to effectively develop and deliver online counselor training courses. The results of the current study indicate that

careful consideration should be given specifically on how to facilitate high quality interpersonal interactions within the online environment. Given that all but one of the participants in the current study had not received formal education in online andragogy, Counselor education doctoral programs should consider integrating training in effective online teaching in their preparation of future Counselor Educators so that individuals are entering the workforce prepared to train counselors online. Additional research is needed to understand the most effective forms of training for Counselor Educators preparing to engage online counselor training yet the current study provides early evidence that more systematic training is needed.

Counselor training programs that offer online courses should also consider how they are incentivizing online course development and delivery for their faculty members. Participants in the current study reported a range of incentives for developing online coursework ranging from financial compensation or course releases to no compensation or course releases. Notably, those individuals who were incentivized to develop online courses found this to be a very valuable support. Developing courses for the online environment may increase a program's accessibility and flexibility, subsequently providing a course buy-out or financial incentive acknowledges the contribution of Counselor Educators who engage in the time-intensive process of developing an online course. For Counselor Educators who might not have intrinsic motivation driving them to move into the online environment, incentives may offer extrinsic motivation to increase buy-in in the online counselor training process. Future research should examine the role

that incentives play in Counselor Educators' motivations to engage online counselor training and consider a range of incentives that address individual needs.

The results of the current study also have implications for Counselor Educators transitioning into training counselors online. Counselor Educators should recognize that developing and delivering online counselor training involves creatively exploring new ways of facilitating learning and interactions with counselors-in training. Instead of directly translating their teaching practices into the online environment, Counselor Educators might benefit from considering their philosophical beliefs about how individuals learn and constructing online teaching practices that allow those beliefs to be embodied in online environments. This includes findings ways to interact with counselors-in-training to provide the types of connections that support learning the counseling profession. The results of this study also indicate that Counselor Educators should recognize that engaging the creative process of online course development is easier if they are motivated to learn new technologies and challenge their traditional model of facilitating education. In fact, the participants in the current study reporting greatest enthusiasm for online teaching, also reported an interest in learning the emerging technologies that could facilitate new ways of interacting with students.

Counselor educators may benefit from carefully reflecting on how they prefer to interact with students within the learning process, and intentionally utilize technologies within their online courses that allow these types of interactions to occur. Counselor educators might require certain synchronous components in their courses so they are able to interact with students in real-time to help them process course content and personal

experiences or to assess counselors-in-training's interpersonal and counseling skill development. Counselor Educators should also consider the overall balance of synchronous and asynchronous online interaction, along with face-to-face interaction (i.e., on campus learning), that will facilitate the types of learning and assessment processes they strive to facilitate.

The characteristics of potential students who are a good-fit for learning through the online medium is a topic discussed by many participants. Respondents described successful experiences with students who were motivated, went above and beyond in their assignments, and reached out to make connections with educators. Researchers have investigated counselor training programs' admissions processes as one of the first gatekeeping opportunities for the counseling profession (McCaughan & Hill, 2015; Swank & Smith-Adcock, 2014). The characteristics of successful students described in the current study may be used by counselor training programs that offer online courses in admissions processes as an initial gatekeeping measure. Furthermore, carefully reflection on how to create more opportunities for all counselors who are trained on line to engage with faculty and their classmates appears to be an important component of high quality online learning.

Suggestions for Future Research

The current study provided the first exploration of Counselor Educators' experiences in developing and delivering online counselor training. The results of this study have highlighted several aspects of Counselor Educators' experiences that warrant further investigation. These areas for future research will be described below.

First, an interesting aspect of exploring Counselor Educators experiences in developing and delivering online counselor training was that participants' experiences contained much variation in the course development and delivery process, the format and tools utilized to facilitate counselor training, and the courses offered in online formats at participants' respective institutions. Currently, no research exists in which researchers examined how counselor training programs make decisions about online course offerings, course development processes, types of online courses being offered, and the various online tools utilized to facilitate online counselor training courses. A survey targeting these variables would provide a better understanding of the landscape of online education in the counselor education field.

Research is needed to better understand how Counselor Educators are trained, either formally or informally, to teach online. Only one participant in the current study reported having formal coursework that addressed online teaching as part of his doctoral preparation. This finding suggests that most participants received training on-the-job and had mixed experiences of the trainings offered at their educational institutions. Further research into how Counselor Educators are being trained to teach online and what types of training are helpful will contribute to counselor training programs' abilities to provide high quality training for Counselor Educators.

Finally, one of the central themes that emerged from the current study was that participants described their connections with counselors-in-training in the online environment as having a diminished quality. Research on interpersonal communications in online education has found that online educator-student communication, particularly

synchronous methods utilizing video-conferencing software, closely resemble communications in a traditional educational setting (Oztok et al., 2013). However, the results of this study indicate that Counselor Educators are experiencing online communications of a diminished quality compared to face-to-face communications. Further research into online communications and interpersonal interactions is needed to develop an understanding of the challenges Counselor Educators face and how the types of nuanced interpersonal interactions required for counselor training can be effectively facilitated online.

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APPENDIX A

RECRUITMENT EMAIL

Dear Counselor Educator,

I would like to invite you to participate in a study I am conducting as part of my dissertation research at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro. This study is focused on learning more about counselor educators' experiences in training counselors in online environments. You have been chosen for this study because you are, or have recently, trained counselors in the online environment and your Department Chair has identified you as a possible participant. There are no financial incentives for participating in this research study.

The research study will consist of a demographic questionnaire and a one-hour interview. I will ask some questions about your experience in transitioning to training counselors in the online environment. These interview questions will be emailed to you at least one-week prior to the interview to allow you to reflect on the aspects of your experience we will discuss. If you would like to participate in this study, please email me at dphall@uncg.edu and notify me of your willingness to participate. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns regarding this study.

Thank you for considering participating in this research opportunity.

Sincerely,

Daniel P. Hall

APPENDIX B

INFORMED CONSENT

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT GREENSBORO

CONSENT TO ACT AS A HUMAN PARTICIPANT

Project Title: Online Counselor Training: Challenges and Successes in the Experiences of Online Counselor Educators

Principal Investigator and Faculty Advisor (if applicable): Daniel P. Hall, J. Scott Young

Participant's Name: _____

What are some general things you should know about research studies?
You are being asked to take part in a research study. Your participation in the study is voluntary. You may choose not to join, or you may withdraw your consent to be in the study, for any reason, without penalty.

Research studies are designed to obtain new knowledge. This new information may help people in the future. There may not be any direct benefit to you for being in the research study. There also may be risks to being in research studies. If you choose not to be in the study or leave the study before it is done, it will not affect your relationship with the researcher or the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.
Details about this study are discussed in this consent form. It is important that you understand this information so that you can make an informed choice about being in this research study.

You will be given a copy of this consent form. If you have any questions about this study at any time, you should ask the researchers named in this consent form. Their contact information is below.

What is the study about?
This is a dissertation research study. Your participation is voluntary. This study is intended to explore the experiences of counselor educators developing and implementing online counselor training.

Why are you asking me?
This research focuses on counselor educators actively involved in online counselor

training. Participants must hold a degree in Counselor Education and must currently be teaching or have taught at least one fully online course in a CACREP accredited counselor education program in the past year. Also, participants must have received the majority of their formal education in face-to-face formats and must have been involved in the course development process for the online counselor training courses they have taught.

What will you ask me to do if I agree to be in the study?
This study uses semi-structured interview to gather data on participants' experiences of developing and implementing online counselor training. This is an exploratory study, so there are no interventions or experimental aspects of this study.

Is there any audio/video recording?
Interviews will be conducted using video-conferencing software, but only the audio portion of the interview will be recorded. The video-portion of the interview will not be recorded.

What are the risks to me?
The Institutional Review Board at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro has determined that participation in this study poses minimal risk to participants. This study explores your experiences developing and implementing online counselor training. There is minimal risk in participating in this study.

If you have questions, want more information or have suggestions, please contact Daniel P. Hall or J. Scott Young at 336-334-3423, or you can email Daniel at dphall@uncg.edu.

If you have any concerns about your rights, how you are being treated, concerns or complaints about this project or benefits or risks associated with being in this study please contact the Office of Research Integrity at UNCG toll-free at (855)-251-2351.

Are there any benefits to society as a result of me taking part in this research?
This study may contribute to the knowledge about how counselor educators are trained to develop and implement counselor training. Also, this study may contribute to the knowledge around what counselor educators have found to be effective and challenging in developing and implementing online counselor training.

Are there any benefits to *me* for taking part in this research study?
There are no direct benefits to participants in this study.

Will I get paid for being in the study? Will it cost me anything?
There are no costs to you or payments made for participating in this study.

How will you keep my information confidential?
All electronically stored participant information will be stored under a minimum of two layers or password protection. All participant information will be identified by an identification number; no identifying information will be linked to participant data. All information obtained in this study is strictly confidential unless disclosure is required by law.

For Internet Research, include this wording: Absolute confidentiality of data provided through the Internet cannot be guaranteed due to the limited protections of Internet access. Please be sure to close your browser when finished so no one will be able to see what you have been doing.

What if I want to leave the study?
You have the right to refuse to participate or to withdraw at any time, without penalty. If you do withdraw, it will not affect you in any way. If you choose to withdraw, you may request that any of your data which has been collected be destroyed unless it is in a de-identifiable state. The investigators also have the right to stop your participation at any time. This could be because you have had an unexpected reaction, or have failed to follow instructions, or because the entire study has been stopped.

What about new information/changes in the study?
If significant new information relating to the study becomes available which may relate to your willingness to continue to participate, this information will be provided to you.

Voluntary Consent by Participant:
By signing this consent form/completing this interview (used for an IRB-approved waiver of signature) you are agreeing that you read, or it has been read to you, and you fully understand the contents of this document and are openly willing consent to take part in this study. All of your questions concerning this study have been answered. By signing this form, you are agreeing that you are 18 years of age or older and are agreeing to participate, or have the individual specified above as a participant participate, in this study described to you by Daniel P. Hall.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX C

ORIGINAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

I will begin by asking you about your general preparation for training counselors online.

1. Please describe your training specific to developing and facilitating online counselor training.
2. Please describe how you became involved with online counselor training.
3. What was the process like for you in adjusting to and learning about training counselors in the online environment?
    a. Professionally as a Counselor Educator
    b. Personally

The next few questions I ask will be specifically related to course development…

4. How does your teaching philosophy inform your course development for training counselor online?
5. The literature suggests that many educators tend to directly transfer already existing face-to-face courses into online courses.
    a. What was the process of creating online courses like initially?
    b. How has this evolved over time?
6. The literature also suggests that particular online platforms, software, and tools are effective in facilitating different aspects of the learning process.
    a. What platforms, software, and tools have you utilized in training counselors online?

b. What were your intentions in incorporating these into your courses?

7. What have been your greatest challenges in developing courses for online counselor training?

Now I would like to talk with you about the need for further training and support for you and other Counselor Educators involved in online counselor training.

8. Thinking beyond your own specific context, what preparation do you view as important/critical for counselor educators who train counselors in the online environment?
9. What supports or training do you believe would improve your effectiveness in training counselors in the online environment?
10. Is there anything you would like to tell me about your experiences in online counselor training that we did not already discuss or that would help be to better understand your experiences?

APPENDIX D

MODIFIED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Please describe your personal philosophy of teaching.
    a. What does your teaching look like in practice?
2. Please describe your experience in translating your approach to teaching into the online environment.
    a. Does the online environment impact your approach to teaching? If so, how?
    b. Does the online environment impact your approach to course development (i.e., methods of teaching, content delivery, assignments etc.)? If so, how?
3. How would you describe the personal adjustments you experienced when you first began training counselors in the online environment (e.g., comfort with technology, frustrations, learning curve, etc.)?
    a. Can you provide an example that captures your personal adjustment?
4. What challenges have you experienced in developing and implementing courses for online counselor training?
    a. Can you provide an example(s) of such a challenge?
5. What are successes you have experienced in developing and implementing courses for online counselor training?
    a. Can you provide an example(s) of a such a success?

6. Has your approach to developing and implementing online counselor training evolved over time? If so, how?
7. The literature suggests that supports (i.e., institutional, departmental, etc.) are critical components for providing effective online education.
    a. What supports have you received?
    b. How have these supports (or lack thereof) shaped your experience?
8. Would you share a story that captures your overall experience with online counselor training?

APPENDIX E

PARTICIPANT QUESTIONNAIRE

Please answer the following:

1. Gender:
    - Male
    - Female
    - Transgendered
    - Other _____
2. Age _____
3. Race/Ethnicity:
    - American Indian or Alaska Native
    - Asian
    - Black or African American
    - Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
    - White
    - Hispanic or Latino
    - Other _____
4. Please identify all training and/or preparation you have received specific to online counselor training (mark all that apply):
    k. Workshops
    l. Reading

m. Co-teaching

n. Webinars

o. Formal course work

p. Conference programs

q. Online tutorials

r. Consultations

s. Peer-mentoring

t. Other _____

5. For what type of academic institution do you provide online counselor training?

   - Public
   - Private non-profit
   - Private for-profit

6. Please list the titles of each online counselor training course you have developed:

7. Please list the titles of each online counselor training course you have taught:

8. What types of online teaching tools have you utilized in the courses you have taught (mark all that apply)?

   - Synchronous (e.g., video-conferencing, text-based chat, etc.)

- Asynchronous (e.g., discussion boards, blogs, social media etc.)

9. How effective is the online format for delivering courses you have personally taught?

Very Effective	Somewhat Effective	Somewhat Ineffective	Very Ineffective
1	2	3	4

10. Please describe how you became involved in online counselor training. Did you actively seek out opportunities or was it required by your institution?

11. What is your preferred method of contact you for follow-up questions and future communication?

    Email: _____

    Phone: _____

APPENDIX F

BRACKETING EXERCISE

Prior to the data analysis, the research team members met and reviewed the CQR process and engaged in a bracketing process to acknowledge experiences and biases with online counselor training. The questions and key responses are listed below.

What are your general experiences and impressions of online counselor training?

- I don't have any experience in teaching online, but I had a bad experience in my graduate program with an online course. The teacher was not responsive and didn't up to scheduled meetings. I ended up doing a lot of self-learning because there was limited interaction with others students and the teacher. It was a bad experience overall. I have used some online tools in teaching, such as discussion boards and online meeting software. I found that I had to keep it focused and engaging by bringing the online material into the classroom. My experiences using technology in teaching have been much better than my experiences in the online class in my graduate program. I enjoyed giving a guest lecture in an online post-maters certificate course and it was an interesting experience because I was talking to the students via audio, but the students were responding to me via text. I also had a doctoral class that integrated a lot of online meetings and it was a positive experience because it was learning in a different way. I want to teach an online class to the get the experience, but I'm concerned that for students, it is easy to hide in an online environment.

- I have never taken a fully-online class as part of my graduate training, but I have enjoyed the online elements that were integrated into my face-to-face courses. I have taught both fully-online and hybrid courses at the undergraduate level and I have provided online supervision for counselors-in-training. Most of my experiences facilitating online education and supervision have been positive. There have been multiple learning curves for various technical and organization reasons, but it has been a positive experience overall. I generally take a pragmatic approach to online education and believe it is going to continue to be an important part of our field and education in general. I like messing around with technology and trying new things with technology, so that aspect of online education is exciting to me. I think I'm biased to want this online education thing to work, so I might have a tendency to look at things through an optimistic lens.
- None of this online technology existed when I was a student. When online education began to emerge, my initial reaction was we shouldn't be doing this, this won't work. Part of it was because it was mainly the for-profit sector that was engaging online education. Now, it still isn't my preference, but I think it can be done well and there is a place for it in our field. It challenges students to engage in a different way, they can't fade into the back of the classroom. I still question skill development online, but I think it's great for learning content. As a department, we are trying to allow doc students to get experience teaching online because they are going to be asked to do this. Personally, I haven't taught a course fully online, but I have done online lectures and webinars and I've found that it's harder to

read the audience in the online environment. I also use course management systems in all of my courses. I've had lots of conversations with people who are teaching online and if students aren't doing well, it's difficult to get them up to speed and recognize what is blocking them. If people want to underperform, they can hide in the online environment. If you start with lower-quality students and then put them in an online environment, that's problematic. There are some ethical issues around pushing people through programs, especially in for-profit settings. One of my biases is that we have evolved to read subtle cues and there is a loss of communication in the online environment, a loss of information, you can't read the energy like you can face-to-face. I want to out-loud that I might be biased toward looking for what doesn't work.

How do you think you would translate your approach to teaching into the online environment?

- I would to make sure that I take the foundational parts of my teaching approach, like creating student interaction and presenting class material in a variety of ways, into the online environment. I don't think someone's teaching philosophy needs to change when moving from face-to-face to online teaching, but the way that philosophy is practiced might have to be altered. I do think there are plenty of online tools for educators to utilize to create variety and engagement for their students and themselves.

- My experiential lens relies on a lot of inter and intrapersonal reading, but I'm pragmatic in that we have to adopt and evolve and grow, so I would look for what aspects of my teaching approach most effectively work online. The pragmatist in me thinks that we need to find a way to do this (online teaching).
- I would be looking for different ways to take central elements of my philosophy in teaching, such as creativity, into the online environment. I am more inclined to go to the what works aspects of my teaching versus the what doesn't work. That might be influenced by my liking new things and liking new experiences.

What challenges do think might exist in training counselors in the online environment?

- The biggest challenge would be that transition, learning how to do what you know how to do in the face-to-face environment and learning how to do that online. The personal motivation and the supports of the university and the department would be critical. I think the temperament of the instructor could be important. If something doesn't go well, how do they respond? Do they give up or do they see it as an opportunity to try something different to correct it?
- I think developing personal connections with and between students would be the most challenging aspect. Although online relationships are a big thing now, I don't know how well that relational development piece translates into an online environment, especially in our field where we need to connect with students to be able to assess their interpersonal skills.

- Confidence as an instructor in using this modality would be a major challenge for me because I have little experience. There isn't the same template for teaching in the online environment as there is in the face-to-face environment. I think the preparation work would be more challenging in the online environment and having technical support to help when issues come up would be critical.

What successes do you think might exist in training counselors in the online environment?

- I think counselor educators can experience personal fulfillment and develop a positive reputation in our field for having the ability to teach online. The online format seems to be more student-friendly, since traditional-age students use technology in their everyday lives. I think it could also cause you to stretch yourself as an educator and learn how to teach in a different way. Some students might be able to benefit from being able to express themselves in ways that they might not in a face-to-face course.
- It opens access to counselor education programs for an entirely different groups of students that might potentially be great counselors. I'm sure there are plenty of people out there who would make excellent counselors who haven't pursued the education for various reasons and online counselor training might provide opportunities for them to pursue the profession. I think it probably forces educators to be creative in ways that they might not be pushed to in a traditional face-to-face format. I think people who are strongly motivated to learn this

profession might do really well in an online environment, where there might be more self-directed learning than other formats.

- One of the advantages of online education seems to be that everyone has to participate and in that way, it's very equitable for students. I also feel that there is an energy that comes with having to figure out how to do something that you've already been doing, but in a completely new way.

APPENDIX G

RECRUITMENT EMAIL FOR PILOT STUDY

Dear Counselor Educator,

I hope this email finds you well. I am recruiting participants for my dissertation study, which is a qualitative examination of the experiences of counselor educators training counselors in the online environment. I would greatly appreciate if you would pass along my recruitment information (attached) to any of your faculty who are teaching or have previously taught at least one master's-level counselor education course online. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns regarding your faculty's participation in my study. Thank you so much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Daniel P. Hall