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Larry D. Burlew

Vanessa L. Alleyne

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Abstract

The authors introduce a pedagogical paradigm for international graduate students studying community counseling in the United States. The paradigm is based on previous research conducted by the authors on the educational experience of four international graduate students in a master's level community counseling program. The paradigm includes five phases and is in the form of a path with an emphasis on respecting the world cultures of students from other countries and addressing the special needs of international students studying in the United States. The paradigm contributes to the ongoing dialog related to the pedagogy of counselor education.

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Larry D. Burlew and Vanessa L. Alleyne

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International graduate students represent a special population in the American educational system and face unique challenges while studying in the United States. These students differ from American graduate students, regardless of racial or ethnic identity, because of the unique issues involved with learning to live and study in a foreign country (Bartram, 2007; Jacob, 2001). Chapdelaine and Alexitch (2004) labeled this transition as a cultural shock describing it as "the multiple demands for adjustment that individuals [international students] experience at the cognitive, behavioral, emotional, social, and physiological levels, when they relocate to another culture" (p. 168).

For international graduate students this cultural shock framework includes confronting many challenges such as language issues, long-term separation from home and family, cultural adjustment, and

adjustment to the American educational system (Cemalcilar & Falbo, 2008; Hanassab & Tidwell, 2002; Hyun, Quinn, Madon, & Lustig, 2007; Olivas & Li, 2006; Perrucci & Hu, 1995). While American educators and practitioners (e.g., Dedrick & Watson, 2002; Wedding, McCartney, & Currey, 2009) have made some progress in responding to the needs of international students, Eland (2001) claimed that international students do meet their educational goals, but "their experience could be less stressful and more meaningful if institutions of higher education take into account their unique needs" (p. 99).

As international students struggle with acculturation issues related to studying in a foreign country, they also confront the specific requirements of their programs of study. Angelova and Riazantseva (1999) referred to this as "acquiring the conventions of different disciplinary discourses" (p. 491), while questioning

whether international students are prepared to deal with these discourses. They labeled these conventions “disciplinary enculturation,” which involves both mastery of content knowledge and “field-specific value systems and definitions as well as the reading and writing strategies associated with professional discourse” (pp. 491-2).

Disciplinary enculturation, for our purposes then, refers to the pedagogy of counselor education and must be examined in more detail with regard to training international students in community counseling (CC) programs. However, counselor educators have already been criticized for not having an informed pedagogy, including criticism related to the training of our own diverse American student population (Nelson & Jackson, 2003). As we work on refining our current disciplinary enculturation for American students, concomitant discussions must also occur about the experience and appropriateness of this disciplinary enculturation for international students.

Darcy Haag Granello (2000) suggested that rather than lacking an informed counselor education pedagogy, we may not be sharing or articulating the pedagogy of counselor education thoroughly enough. This article responds to her suggestion by sharing a pedagogical paradigm to address the needs of international students in a master’s level CC program in the United States.

The Needs of International Graduate Students in CC Programs

In a qualitative study, Burlew and Alleyne (2006) examined the experience of four international graduate students studying in the United States in a CC program. Our interest evolved from concerns already voiced about this special population in the American educational system. For example, as early as 1991 Pedersen wrote, “International students return home with the „wrong” skills, or skills unsuited to their home country” (p. 13). Beykont and Daiute (2002) and Perrucci

and Hu (1995) claimed that international students have academic and cultural adjustment issues when studying in the United States that must be addressed. Finally, criticisms (e.g., Stadler, Suh, Cobia, Middleton, & Carney, 2006) about a lack of attention to a strong counselor education pedagogy have produced criticisms about what is being taught to American students. However, little has been documented about international students in these same counselor education classrooms, so their voices are lacking in the literature with respect to effective counselor education pedagogy.

Therefore, it is important to “hear” the voices of international students in CC programs, and the authors listened to these unheard voices in a qualitative study examining the experiences of four international graduate students. These students attended a small Northeast university and were all at the internship stage of their program. While four participants is a small number, the authors believe the interviews provided a beginning to hear the “collective stories” which “take the point of view of interviewing subjects and giving voice to those who are silenced or marginalized in the cultural [study]” (Miller & Glassner, 1997, p. 99) (in this case, the culture of international students in a CC program). The participants were from countries where the profession of mental health counseling is either not well established or nonexistent (from the students’ perspectives). The students were from South America, Nepal, Turkey, and Africa, and ranged in age from 24-34.

The authors determined that the experience of these international graduate students in an American CC program was qualitatively different from their fellow American students. Acclimation to the counseling field, interpersonal isolation and bias, and lack of a shared historical culture all contributed to significant difficulties with adjustment both in and out of the classroom. Our recommendations for change included the following: vigorously challenge the continued use of Eurocentric

counseling theory; improve multicultural competence of American students and faculty to include a global perspective; make concerted outreach, pre-admission, and mentoring efforts to international students; broaden pedagogical strategies to articulate and clarify theory and instruction; make greater use of experiential data available via instruction and the students themselves.

Our findings must be viewed with caution because of the small sample size. However, our work provided an initial opportunity to hear the unique voices of students studying in CC programs who are not from the United States and who may return to their home countries to work. These student voices make important contributions to discussions on the pedagogy of counselor education, particularly related to culturally sensitive educational practices and curriculum. In further response to the voices of international students, we developed a paradigm for addressing the special needs of international students in CC programs, recognizing that other needs may exist that were not identified due to the limited sample size.

Counselor Education Pedagogy: A Response to International Students

The paradigm in Figure 1 represents our response to the concerns and educational needs expressed by international students studying CC. While the recommendations may need to be modified based on variables such as size of institution and program, the model provides guidelines for counselor education programs to address the needs of international students.

Overview

Our paradigm is like a path that takes twists and turns, gradually narrowing as students prepare for the school-to-work transition. The path begins with global multiculturalism, representing the world cultures of adults who are in their home countries or in the United States considering the study of CC. These potential students are adults with rich and varied cultures who bring worldviews that must be honored once they start on the path. The solid line at the left of the path represents the cultural values that stay with each student as she/he

Figure 1. Pedagogical Paradigm for International Students Studying Community Counseling

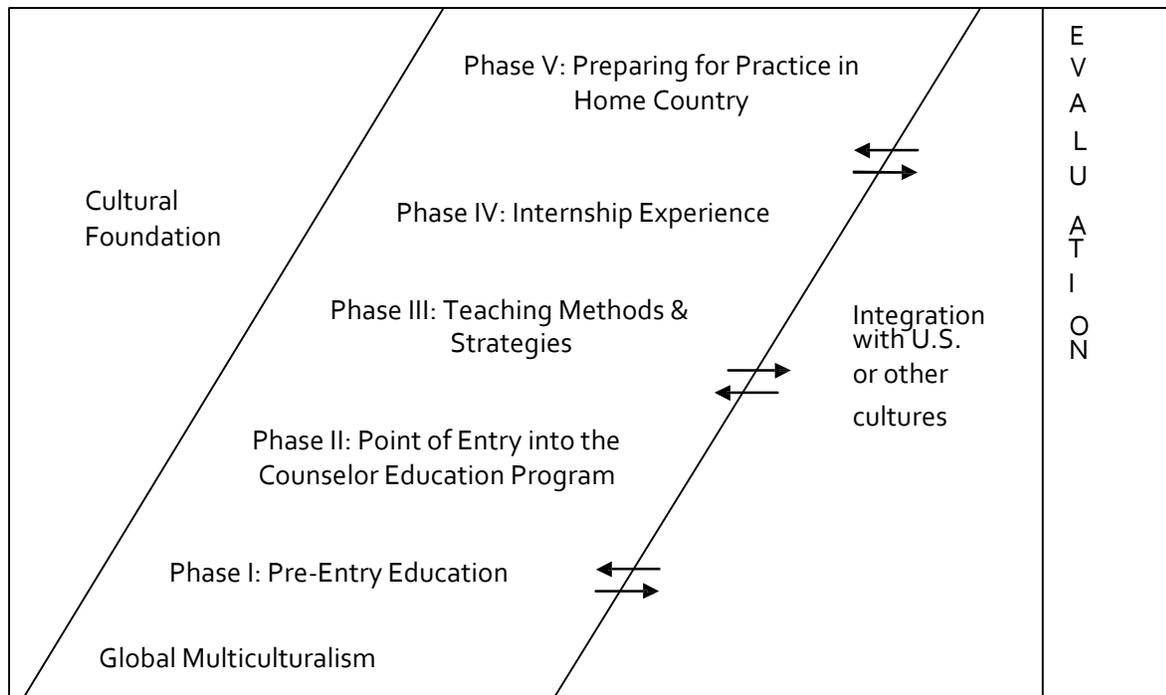


Figure 1. The five phases for addressing the unique needs of an international graduate student in a master's level community counseling program maneuvers through the study of CC within an American culture and educational system. The line to the right of the path with two-way arrows represents the interweaving of world cultures with the diverse cultures of American students. Phase I is called "Pre-Entry" and begins when an adult from another country expresses an interest in studying CC. This phase involves learning more about the profession of mental health counseling and being a graduate student in America before applying to a program. Phase II begins when an international student starts a CC program in America. This phase addresses our participants' concerns with acculturation, disciplinary enculturation, bias, isolation from American students, educational support, and the pedagogy of counselor education. Phase III addresses the concerns and special needs of international students related to teaching methods and strategies for both knowledge and skills classes. Phase IV specifically responds to our participants' concerns about completing an internship in a community mental health setting. Phase V addresses our (Burlew & Alleyne, 2006) finding that international students begin a journey "with a lack of connection and understanding to the Euro-American practice of counseling in the United States and finished with an over identification and rigid connection to the Westernized practice of counseling" (p. 52). The challenge in Phase V is to help international students feel comfortable and prepared to return to their home countries to practice, regardless of when and if that occurs. Finally, in our paradigm, evaluation is a continuous process in any educational model, thus a continuous path at the far right of Figure 1.

Foundation: Global Multiculturalism

Our paradigm begins with a student's own world culture (at the bottom of the figure) and perception of what the study of CC means through her/his unique world cultural lens. As with all students, culture serves to filter graduate educational experience and life in America (represented by the solid line at the left in Figure 1). The solid line also represents the rich global perspectives that international students bring to counseling programs. Participants in our study talked about "bringing different perspectives to American students," "being an asset" (in terms of diversity) to the classroom, and providing an "opportunity for professors to think about counseling in cultures different from the U.S." The line at the right in Figure 1 represents a "merging" of multiple world cultures, necessitating adjustment by all students and challenging traditional practices in American education.

Phase I: Pre-Entry Education

Phase I begins when an adult from another country explores the study of CC in the United States. Based on our study (Burlew & Alleyne, 2006), three specific needs should be addressed: a) gaining accurate knowledge about the profession of counseling in America before choosing to study CC and determining how it relates to professions in their countries (or not); b) learning about typical educational methods used in counseling programs, but uncommon in their countries, like self-awareness exercises and videotaping; and c) becoming more aware of cultural adjustment issues. As potential international students are receiving education about CC and studying in the United States, the host academic environment must, in turn, be preparing itself for the merging of world cultures and creating a more global educational environment.

Pedagogical Response

For Phase I self-directed study is the most viable method of education for the international students still residing in their countries. We recommend a program be developed and linked to the counselor education web page. The program will be titled "International Students: Studying Community Counseling in America." Information about CC and studying in America is included followed by questions related to how the information relates to their own countries. Graduate Admissions and the office of International Student Affairs are critical to Phase I education. The following are suggestions about the types of information to include:

1. The roles and responsibilities of licensed counselors (perhaps even a link to the *OOH* and the state licensing board), including samples of potential work sites in America; ask: What professions provide mental health services in your country? Will a master's in CC allow you to work in those professions?
2. A description of the courses in a CC program, including an overview of internship; ask: What knowledge seems familiar versus what isn't? What types of programs teach this type of knowledge in your country? How are internship experiences similar/different than those in your country?
3. Clear definitions, purpose and examples of teaching methods/strategies which initially caused our participants stress like directed discussion, self-awareness exercises, mock interviewing, video/audio-taping, and transcriptions; ask: How familiar are you with these methods of teaching? What concerns do you have about these methods? What adjustments, if any, will you make based on your previous academic experience?
4. Cultural adjustments made by other international students, which can be

accomplished by providing a link to any article on international students studying in America; ask: What experience have you had with cross-cultural education? What concerns do you have about studying in the United States? How will you prepare yourself for a transition to the United States? An excellent source of information can emerge from a blog written by a current or former international student in the program. Such information speaks directly from another international student's own experience, and is a way to incorporate more real life, day to day issues or concerns.

Forming an educational environment sensitive to all worldviews is an ongoing process involving students, faculty, staff, and university personnel. For counselor educators, we must challenge ourselves in the teaching of knowledge and skills related to Euro-American theories of counseling to honor the worldviews about psychological services in other countries. Therefore, for Phase I, the educational recommendations relate to creating sensitivity to world cultures in the educational environment before international students begin a counseling program.

The following are suggestions for creating this culturally sensitive educational environment, even though this is a continuous process and ultimately involves more than just the counselor education program itself.

1. Develop a case study to simulate studying counseling in a foreign country to be used during new student orientation. At the end, students are prompted to imagine they are starting their first class with an instructor lecturing in a foreign language. What unique needs would they have? Additionally, a current or former international student from the program can share her/his experience in coming to study in the United States.
2. In-service training can occur for the program faculty and staff. During this

training, specific issues faced by international students should be addressed, along with the responding educational support needed.

The following questions can be addressed: What changes must be made in the department organization to respond more consistently to the needs of international students? What pedagogical changes can be made to assure that international students “don’t fall behind” due to common American teaching techniques such as class discussions or the use of American films or history unfamiliar to international students? How will language issues be handled in skills building classes? Can we assist international students in developing social/educational networks with American students, giving them an equal advantage of getting past notes or sample exams? How do we reinforce the American concept that students can come to professors and ask for additional time and/or help or admit that they’re confused?

3. Before international students arrive, staff can serve as advocates to help with initial transition issues. Upon acceptance, staff can work jointly with the Office of International Affairs, initiating contact early to address specific needs. Demonstrate an interest in the student by asking questions like: When are you arriving? How will you get to campus? Where are you staying, if arriving before the semester begins? Do you know anybody in the local community? Ask another international student to contact the new student and answer any questions she/he may have.

Phase II: Point of Entry into the Counseling Program

This phase begins when the student is in America and makes the first physical contact (i.e., by phone or in person) with the counseling program and continues through the initial stages of cultural, academic, social, and psychological adjustment. As can be expected, our participants had personal, social, financial, cultural, and

psychological adjustment issues that other international graduate students have reported. Additionally, our participants experienced adjustment related to the disciplinary enculturation of counselor education to include: emphasis on language within the profession; use of APA in writing papers; the Euro-American perspective on the roles and responsibilities of a counselor; specific knowledge related to mental health terms, concepts, and diagnosis. Our participants reported dealing with early bias about language, specific cultures, home countries, and stereotypes and with the “impatience and standoffishness” of American students.

Pedagogical Response

Phase II educational recommendations fall into two broad categories, environmental and personal. While environmental issues relates to the university experience itself, we concentrate on the classroom environment since that is one our participants mentioned most frequently. Personal strategies address the participants’ needs related to adjusting to the disciplinary enculturation aspects studying counseling.

The following recommendations may help create a supportive and culturally sensitive classroom environment for international students.

1. In the beginning classes, like Introduction to Counseling, international students can be given every opportunity to share their views about the educational system in their countries. Differences and similarities can be explored, and students can design supportive strategies to enhance the educational experience of international students.

2. Create as many opportunities as possible, early in the program, for interaction between domestic and international students. This interaction helps with the acculturation of American students

to other world cultures. For example, use small group work, but have international students move among the different groups sharing their world perspectives on the groups' conclusions. Ask international students to develop case studies that might occur in their countries.

3. Your Chi Sigma chapter can sponsor a global multicultural day educating the university community about counseling and psychological services in other countries. International students will help in the planning and implementation of the program.

4. Organize small study groups in all classes for international students. Instructors will most likely have to initiate this because international students will not initially feel as comfortable as domestic students in making these connections. The groups are an important educational support for international students, but they also provide the opportunity for a rich cultural exchange between American and international students.

5. Assign a student mentor or a "buddy," someone who's already gone through the first year, who can be helpful with transition issues.

Educational strategies like those described above help international students receive more educational support from the environment. They also help American students overcome resistance about international students in terms of language, cultural differences or cultural bias, which contribute to American students appearing standoffish.

For adjusting to the more personal aspects in studying CC, a tutorial method or small group work is recommended. If small group work is used, then American students can be included as well. However, if small groups are used, no more than 5 students should be included to ensure that the international student(s) has a voice within the educational process. Examples of strategies include:

1. Include tutorial programs linked to the counselor education web site on specific knowledge and skills such as the APA style of writing, an introduction to mental health concepts in America, or using discussion as a form of expression in classes. This training can occur as small group workshops. If an international student has not had an abnormal psychology course, our recommendation is that he/she takes this as a prerequisite.

2. Develop a peer mentoring program, involving both an American student in the program and an international student already established on campus. The peer mentors can be particularly helpful with social adjustment to American life.

3. Initially, the faculty advisor should meet with the international student weekly. Some international students may need encouragement to freely communicate their needs and concerns with faculty because it may not be a common practice in their countries.

4. Create opportunities for international students to regularly interact with American students, which help them practice their verbal language skills.

Phase III: Teaching Methods and Strategies

This phase relates directly to the classroom experience for international students, and their impressions of the teaching methods and strategies used in counselor education classes. While effective pedagogy in Phase II may create an educational environment more conducive to learning, counselor educators must still ask themselves what teaching methods and strategies best address the special needs of international students in the classroom? The overriding goal of this phase is to select and use teaching methods and strategies that include international students equally in the learning process.

Pedagogical Response

Providing a list of sample teaching methods and strategies could never be comprehensive enough to address all the special needs of international students in CC programs. Therefore, we designed a list of questions that counselor educators can use as a filter when preparing lessons. The questions can help ensure that international students feel comfortable enough to be involved in the classroom experience. The questions are:

How have you addressed the language barriers that might prevent an international student from fully experiencing the process? How have you addressed anything that might be specific to the American culture or American history that might exclude an international student's understanding of the method? How have you addressed common teaching methods in counseling classes like directed discussion or sharing of "private" personal stories so that international students can engage in the learning process? How have you addressed the unique mental health language that is critical to the learning process so that international students can freely engage in the learning process? How have you addressed differences in how the knowledge/skills might be used (or not) in the countries of international students as compared to America and American students?

Example of Applying the Questions

The following example focuses on a lesson for a counseling theories class. Its general purpose is to stimulate a discussion for choosing a theoretical approach based on different types of client issues. This example is not a finished product, but rather it is in the planning stages to demonstrate the use of the questions described above.

Lesson Topic: Client Needs/Theoretical Approach

Objective: The student will be able to accurately describe at least 3 assessment questions to ask self when selecting a theoretical approach for various client issues.

Method: Directed Discussion

Training Aide: Video clip from movie, "Three Faces of Eve" (original version with Joanne Woodward)

During the planning stage of preparing a lesson, use the questions as a filter to assure that the special needs of international students are addressed while developing a lesson. In doing so, there is a greater chance that the international students can be as actively engaged in the educational experience as American students. Each question is addressed below.

1. Language barriers: In advance, make a transcription of the video clip available on Blackboard (BB). In the transcription define any words/jargon that might be specific to the American culture. Ideally, the clip can be translated into the language of the international student(s), even though this may not be possible. Make the clip available in advance to international students (or after the class to view at their leisure).

2. Cultural/historical implications: Plan on introducing the lesson with an historical overview of the 1950s and the climate for treating clients with mental illness. Explain who Joanne Woodward is and why the movie was so significant at the time.

3. Teaching method: Hopefully, the method of using directed discussion has already been introduced to international student(s). However, after the transcription on BB, explain that a directed discussion method will be used to process certain questions about the film's content. Define directed discussion again, its purpose and uses in the educational process, and list a

series of questions that students can consider in advance. To assure that all students have a chance to participate (even quieter American students), a discussion can continue via BB.

4. Unique mental health language: Post definitions of the mental health concepts evident in the video clip like multiple personality disorder (now, dissociative identity disorder) and psychosis on BB, and then review the definitions in class before showing the video clip. Students can post questions about the definitions, which can be addressed before the lesson occurs.

5. Differences in knowledge/skill: A series of questions can be developed to include the unique perspectives of international students. For example, ask students to share where they saw evidence of the various mental health concepts in the clip. Ask international students to explain how behavior exhibited by Joanne Woodward would be explained in their countries. How would it be labeled? What would happen to a person in their countries who exhibited such behavior? Then, ask the class to consider what counseling approach(es) seem appropriate for a client addressing her/his issues based on the description being described by the international students. International students can then share their views on how such a client might respond to the suggested theoretical approaches. Then continue the discussion thinking of Joanne Woodward as the client with her presenting symptoms. Come to a conclusion about factors to consider when selecting a theoretical approach based on client issues.

Assign homework: 1/3 of the class can research common treatment recommendations for dissociative identity disorder in America; 1/3 can research common treatment recommendations for this disorder in other countries; and 1/3 can research alternative healing approaches recommended for this disorder other than talk therapy.

Phase IV: Internship Experience

Internship is the culminating curricular experience in counseling programs, "provid[ing] an opportunity for the student to perform, under supervision, a variety of counseling activities that a professional counselor is expected to perform" (CACREP, 2001, p. 67). The participants in our study (Burlew & Alleyne, 2006) demonstrated an amazing flexibility in working towards success in their internships, but identified initial concerns causing "nervousness, fears, and self-consciousness" in completing an internship. The most common concerns were: little knowledge of community agencies and ways to secure a placement site; a site's lack of knowledge about international students; fears of not fully understanding American clients linguistically and culturally; difficulties in transcribing required tapes; and less understanding of diagnosis and medical terms to competently maintain client records.

Pedagogical Response

Addressing internship concerns must begin early in the program to fully prepare international students for this class when it occurs. As discussed in Phase I, an overview of Internship is included in the Pre-Entry Phase education. This overview includes: purpose, objectives, process of securing a site, responsibilities, types of services and clients, expectations of program and site, and assurance that placement assistance and education of site supervisors about international students occurs, and contact information for the Internship Coordinator. Within the first year of the program and during Phases II and III, the following strategies are recommended.

1. During the first semester, the Internship Coordinator conducts an internship orientation for international students. Students share how fieldwork experiences

occur in their countries, particularly how internships are arranged and expectations of their field work experiences. Immediate issues/concerns about working with American clients are discussed. An overview of the program's internship is provided followed by group discussion about similarities and differences.

2. During the Introduction to Counseling class, site visits to community agencies should be encouraged. The assignment helps international students better understand the placement process. Advanced preparation includes: identifying common resources, such as the Chamber of Commerce, for locating community agencies; initial contacts with agencies; practice with informational interviewing skills; and writing a resume.

3. During the first semester, the Internship Coordinator arranges for international students to attend several internship classes, providing an introduction to the internship experience. Process these visits in small groups, possibly including internship students.

4. During the second semester, the Internship Coordinator meets with international students individually to discuss personal interests and related internship sites. In small groups or individually, informational interviewing, the role of interviews in America, and the interview process in securing an internship site are reviewed. Based on interests, the Coordinator refers students to two sites, but students arrange their own interviews. Before students begin calling site supervisors, the supervisors a) are informed about the educational strategy and agree to do the informational interviewing; b) have knowledge of the international student's background; and c) will provide feedback about the student's interviewing skills and presentation of knowledge about mental health counseling.

5. As part of Phase III, professors can a) relate theory to practice with examples from community agencies when possible; and b) meet individually with international students to discuss their understanding of practice within that specialty. For example, in the career development or family counseling class, professors can arrange site visits for international students so they can shadow a family or career counselor for a day.

6. Throughout Phases II and III, create opportunities for international students to interact with American students or American populations in some way, which helps strengthen their linguistic and cultural understanding of American clients. In the appraisal class, for example, they can tape an interpretation session and transcribe it (allowing them to experience the transcription process). Their critique can also include linguistic or cultural issues they experienced in working with the client. International students may need more intensive educational support immediately before and during internship. To begin the internship process, the Internship Coordinator can meet individually with international students to discuss potential placement sites. Before any referral is made, potential site supervisors need to understand the special needs of interns from other countries. Training supervisors to work with international students can be included in the program's supervisory training.

After a site is secured for an international student, further educational support must occur. The Internship Coordinator can arrange for a site visit, taking the student with her/him. The Coordinator can act as a "coach" to help the student learn to express her/his needs to the site supervisor. Additionally, the Coordinator can offer in-service training for the staff in working with international populations. The international intern can be part of the training by sharing information about the way psychological services are offered in her/his country.

During the internship class, the instructor can provide tutorial help to international students related to diagnosis, treatment planning, and progress notes. For example, provide concrete examples of what to include in progress notes. Arrange for peer supervision with an American intern to provide consistent feedback on linguistic and cultural nuances in American clients. In class, interactive discussions can occur; international students sharing their experiences with American clients and American students sharing their experiences working with immigrant or foreign clients. The global perspectives on different types of clients can only enrich the internship experience for all students.

Phase V: Preparing for Practice in Home Country

At this phase of an international student's training, counselor educators might be asking themselves, "Have we prepared international students in a culturally sensitive enough way to allow them to return home and feel comfortable practicing counseling in their home countries – if they so choose?" We (Burlew & Alleyne, 2006) concluded that the Euro-American approach to counselor training created an "over identification and rigid connection to the Westernized practice of counseling" (p. 52). Three (3) of our participants concluded that they would align themselves with American schools and/or international organizations practicing from a Westernized worldview if returning to their home countries. They believed this was one of the few options open to them to use their master's degree. If they attempted to practice a Euro-American approach to counseling, three participants felt they would be "pioneers" in establishing the profession in their countries. All questioned whether or not they had the professional experience and capability to be a "pioneer." Finally, three participants believed they would, if at all possible, remain in America and practice.

This rigid connection to the Westernized practice of counseling supports Pedersen's (1991) conclusions, both in terms of a "brain-drain" for their home countries and of returning home with the „wrong" skills or "skills unsuited to their home countries" (p. 13). For Phase V, a major goal is supporting international students as they begin the school-to-work transition. Counselor educators may not be used to supporting students in this aspect of their education, but they can help international students think critically about their training as counselors and how it relates to working in their own countries.

Pedagogical Response

By Phase V, international students should be considering how to return home and secure an appropriate job, at least as one of their alternatives in the school-to-work transition process. Therefore, during the last two semesters of their program, international students should be supported in considering this alternative. Career services can provide the structure for the transition process, even though faculty advisors can meet with the students individually throughout this process. The career center can establish a support group for international students transitioning to their home countries to work (regardless of major). Job search strategies specific to the home countries can be processed, implemented, and then supported by the group's efforts. Finding employment while out of one's home country is difficult, but developing a realistic job search plan based on common strategies typical to one's home country can help prepare an international student for this transition. Counseling international students can share their plans with the internship class, which is educational in nature in terms of learning about the job search process in other countries.

Advisors can work individually with international students, giving them an opportunity to discuss job searching and transition issues that are discipline specific.

Information from these meetings can be shared in the career center support group and shared with other international students. Counselor educators can help by addressing questions like a) What current occupational/job titles exist in your country that provide the types of services you learned about in the counseling curriculum?; b) These job titles exist in what types of organizations?; c) What evidence will you need to document that you have the specific knowledge and skills, and how will you collect that information before you leave the U.S.?; d) In terms of direct counseling services, what approaches/skills will work in your country and/or how will you modify them to work appropriately within your culture?; and e) What is your plan if you eventually pioneer and establish the profession of mental health counseling in your home country?

While working on school-to-work transition strategies for returning to their home countries, students should be encouraged to share questions, plans, and ideas about job searching with whatever indigenous support groups exist in their home countries for finding employment. These contacts in their home countries reconnect them to common employment strategies, help them develop a realistic job search plan, and start their job search networking before leaving the United States.

Summary

International graduate students who study in the United States face unique challenges as they pursue an educational agenda. American educators have long recognized that academic requirements should be adjusted to incorporate the needs and experiences of international students. Despite this knowledge, specific programs of study, which require adoption of a particular disciplinary discourse, have varied tremendously in their ability to successfully embrace and support the concerns and interests of international students.

Counselor education programs offer a demanding blend of academic,

professional, and personal self preparation which may be unfamiliar to students from other countries. American efforts to refine counselor education pedagogy have too often failed to consider the experiences, past and future, of international students. In this regard, the voices of international student have been unheard.

Recent efforts to “hear” the voices of these students have documented the qualitative differences and difficulties which exist for students from other nations (Burlew & Alleyne, 2006). Acclimation to the counseling field, as a uniquely American cultural phenomenon with Eurocentric traditions, proved to be difficult. Additionally, and perhaps unexpectedly for some, experiences of interpersonal isolation and bias, from fellow students, faculty members, or at internship sites, deepened the level of challenge that international students face. In response to these complexities, we developed a five phase pedagogical paradigm for counselor educators which can be adopted and used to begin to address the concerns of international students. Throughout this paradigm is an incorporated theme of respectful consultation and collaboration with those international students who are already in our programs. Just as the ideas for a pedagogical paradigm emerged from hearing international student voices, so too must the plans that are put in place to address their concerns.

Collaborative, consultative work is needed within the department and across university departmental lines as well. Graduate admissions, international student offices, counseling faculty, computer webpage developers, internship sites, housing, student affairs, current and former students must be a part of these efforts. The pedagogical paradigm that we have developed is deliberately broad and far reaching. Our ability to successfully acknowledge, welcome, and incorporate the unheard voices of international students into the discipline of counseling requires no less.

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BIOGRAPHICAL STATEMENTS:

Larry D. Burlew, Ed.D., LPC is a Professor and Chair of the Department of Counseling and Educational Leadership at Montclair State University in Montclair, NJ. He has been teaching in counselor education programs for over twenty years and is a past President of the Association for Adult Development and Aging (AADA).

Vanessa L. Alleyne, Ph.D. is an Associate Professor of counselor education at

Montclair State University in Montclair, NJ. She is also the program coordinator for the addictions counseling concentration.

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Larry D. Burlew, Department of Counseling and Educational Leadership, Montclair State University, UN 3162, 1 Normal Avenue, Montclair, NJ 07043.

Email: burlewl@mail.montclair.edu

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