Pre-tenured Counselor Educators Engagement in Direct Counseling Service: Results of a National Survey

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Recommended Citation

Reljic, R. D., Lindsey, C. V., & Protivnak, J. J. (2015). Pre-tenured Counselor Educators Engagement in Direct Counseling Service: Results of a National Survey. *The Journal of Counselor Preparation and Supervision, 7*(3). http://dx.doi.org/10.7729/73.1064

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Abstract

One hundred and fifty pre-tenured counselor education assistant professors participated in a survey regarding their engagement of direct counseling service (DCS). Both quantitative and qualitative data was analyzed. Participants reported significant restrictions on time and a lack of departmental support for DCS and a perception that DCS will not be valued within the tenure processes. However, the majority of pre-tenured faculty desired to engage in more DCS to maintain skills and enhance their teaching and scholarship. Data regarding the participation of DCS by pre-tenured faculty, and implications for counselor educators are shared.

Keywords

Counselor Education, Direct Counseling Service, Tenure Process, Counseling Practice

Author's Notes

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Entry into counselor education faculty positions is often full of uncertainty and unprecedented transition (Baldwin, Lunceford, & Vanderlinden, 2005). New tenure-track professors in academia are expected to demonstrate proficiency and progress in the areas of research, service, and teaching as components of their tenure processes (Austin & Rice, 1998; Hill, 2004). Pre-tenured faculty also faces the challenges of understanding the organizational structures and values, expectations for performance and advancement, and the history and traditions of their new campus settings (Hill, 2004; Sorcinelli, 1994).

Olsen and Crawford (1998) described the early years of the tenure process as elusive and ambiguous, where expectations change frequently. Pre-tenured faculty strive to find a sense of balance between professional and personal lives as they strive for the accomplishments necessary to achieve tenure. Work overload, insufficient feedback, inadequate resources, and lack of collegial support are significant challenges encountered by new faculty (Lease, 1999; Olsen, 1993; Olsen & Crawford,1998; Olsen & Sorcinelli, 1994).

Due to the number of duties that counselor educators are required to complete, engaging in additional work, such as direct counseling service (DCS), can be challenging, and particularly stressful if required as conditions of their employment. Many new counselor educators feel pressure to seek licensure and maintain a direct counseling practice, but are unsure of how DCS counts towards tenure and how to fit DCS in their current schedule (Magnuson, Norem, & Wilcoxon, 2002; Olson, 1993). DCS can be beneficial to faculty and counseling programs because the experience informs teaching and supervision by providing a current understanding of the field (Abouserie, 1996; Nelson & Neufeldt, 1998; Nilson, 2010; Sternberg, 2012). Ethically, DCS is especially helpful in establishing credibility for those counselor educators who do not meet the minimum requirements in their state for licensure, particularly if they teach students

who will be seeking licensure (Cohen, Morgan, DiLillo, & Flores, 2003; DiLillo, DeGue, Cohen, & Morgan, 2006; Himelein & Putnam, 2001). The purpose of this study is to understand pre-tenured counselor educator's participation in DCS, and perceptions regarding whether corresponding counseling departments support this professional activity.

Direct Counseling Service (DCS) and Pre-tenured Counselor Educators

Along with personal life responsibilities and the requirements of a new academic position, pre-tenured counselor educators may engage in professional service (e.g., direct counseling practice) and find ways to balance their time (Sorcinelli, 1994). The decision to engage in direct counseling practice may be a hiring requirement (e.g., obtain hours required for state counselor licensure), or a personal choice. While the demands and pressures on pre-tenured faculty are beginning to be addressed in the literature (Austin & Rice, 1998; Hill, 2004; Magnuson, Norem, & Haberstroh, 2001; Magnuson, Norem, & Lonneman-Doroff, 2009; Magnuson et al., 2002; Magnuson, Shaw, Tubin, & Norem, 2004), we found a paucity of research in the field of counselor education specific to pre-tenured counselor educators engaging in direct counseling practice. Emphasis is given in the counselor education literature primarily to pre-tenured counselor educators navigating the tenure and promotion processes (Hill, 2004; Magnuson et al., 2001; Magnuson et al., 2009; Magnuson et al., 2002; Magnuson et al., 2004). However no attention has been given to how pre-tenured counselor educators enhance their own knowledge and skills through engagement in direct counseling service. New faculty often consider how direct counseling service might be assessed or valued in tenure and promotion processes, how they might attach an additional role to their already overloaded lists of responsibilities (Olsen, 1993), and how direct counseling services might distract or compliment the establishment of a research agenda (Abouserie, 1996). After exploring research on current

student populations and generational effects (Nilson, 2010; Sternberg, 2012) in combination with the direction of current research on counselor education pedagogy (Nelson & Neufeldt, 1998), it is apparent that faculty's teaching and scholarship can be enhanced by direct counseling service (DCS) by keeping faculty current in the classroom with relevant examples of client trends and patterns, while also providing access and knowledge of available and needed research in the area of client care.

A Dilemma for Pre-Tenured Faculty

Engaging in direct counseling service as a faculty member is a complex decision for pre-tenured faculty. Many doctoral graduates of counselor education programs simultaneously receive their diplomas from academic programs only to face the formidable challenge of independently obtaining the requisite supervised postgraduate experience for state counseling licensure (Magnuson, et al., 2002). Pre-tenured faculty who desire to obtain a clinical license for counseling practice must learn how to be a counselor educator while concurrently making time in their schedule to engage in supervised direct counseling practice. The process of earning tenure can be arduous. Hill (2004) noted an inherent contradiction between the philosophical foundation of counselor education, a commitment from counselor educators to model balance, boundaries, and wellness to students and supervisees while navigating career paths full of stressors, insufficient feedback, inadequate resources, lack of collegial support, and unrealistic expectations (Austin & Rice, 1998; Lease, 1999; Olsen & Crawford, 1998). Hill noted that counselor educators' abilities to maintain balance and professionalism might relate to students abilities to do the same. Magnuson, Norem, and Lonneman-Doroff (2009) found that those faculty members who were still employed as counselor educators by the end of their sixth year were able to develop and maintain boundaries between their work and home life. Adding DCS

to an already busy schedule can be a significant decision. Thus, for those pre-tenured faculty who are required or chose to seek licensure, the perceptions of support and knowledge of tenure requirements within their colleges and departments could shape their success.

While there little research in the area of counselor education and direct counseling service, in the psychology literature, the issue of pre-tenured faculty engaging in direct clinical practice has been more closely examined (Cohen et al., 2003; DiLillo et al., 2006; Himelein & Putnam, 2001). Cohen, Morgan, DiLillo, and Flores (2003), emphasized the importance of operating from a true scientist-practitioner model, meaning that direct counseling practice has the unique opportunity to inform teaching and scholarship. While beneficial, DiLillo et al. (2006) reinforced the challenge that the tenure clock does not stop while junior faculty engaged in practice or time-consuming activities related to licensure. Himelein and Putnam (2001) asserted that the best clinical research is informed by practice. When clinicians stopped practicing, research was likely to become divorced from the needs and concerns of real world practitioners. These authors further emphasized that an inexperienced (i.e., no applied experience beyond graduate school) clinician supervising clinical students raised a number of ethical, professional, and liability-oriented concerns. Himelein and Putnam reported that a clinical training program should encourage pre-tenured faculty to engage in DCS; however, support for faculty has not been reported.

The authors of this manuscript decided during our pre-tenured years as counselor education faculty to add direct counseling service to our responsibilities. Our anecdotal experience and interactions with fellow pre-tenured colleagues revealed that while many of our colleagues expressed a desire to engage in direct counseling experience, our fellow counselor educators were uncertain of how to balance DCS with current work expectations. The

exploratory research encapsulated in this manuscript reflects our own personal interest in the symbiotic relationships between service, research, and teaching, and recognition that there is a paucity of research in counselor education that addresses pre-tenured faculty engaging in DCS.

We developed three research questions to organize our exploration of this topic. 1. What are the demographic characteristics of the pre-tenured Counselor Educators who engage and do not engage in DCS? 2. What are pre-tenured Counselor Educator's perceptions of departmental and institutional support for their engagement in direct client service? 3. What are the attitudes of pre-tenured Counselor Educators regarding their own engagement in DCS while being a full-time faculty member within a CACREP-accredited Program?

Since there has been a paucity of research completed on direct counseling service in counselor education, our exploration focused on understanding the work life of pre-tenured counselor educators who complete or do not complete direct counseling service. It was important to investigate how supported pre-tenured counselor educators feel by their institution and department to complete direct counseling service, and pre-tenured counselor educators' perception about completing direct counseling service.

Method

Participants

In this study, we created a population list of 560 assistant professors utilizing the list of 213 Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) Accredited programs on the CACREP website. CACREP programs were selected to provide a reasonably accessible list of faculty to create a population sample. We conducted a web search of each Counselor Education program webpage to create a list of names and emails of assistant professors in counselor education. An electronic survey was sent to all 560 assistant professors

resulting in 150 respondents (a 30% response rate after subtracting all of the invalid email addresses and recently tenured professors). Fifty-eight percent ($n = 87$) identified as female and 39% ($n = 63$) identified as male completed the survey. The age range of the participants was 30 to 65 years old with a mean age of 44 years old. The ethnicity of the participants were reported as Caucasian/European Descent 77% ($n = 115$), African American or African 9% ($n = 14$), Asian American 6% ($n = 9$), Latino/Hispanic 4% ($n = 6$), Biracial 2% ($n = 4$), Native American/Inuit 1% ($n = 2$), and Other <1% ($n = 1$).

Procedure

The authors developed a web-based survey to collect data focusing on three primary areas: (1) participants' perceptions of level of support to engage in DCS; (2) participants' attitudes toward working as a counselor educator and completing direct counseling service; and (3) demographic information. The perceptions and attitudes of participants were measured using Likert-type questions ranging from (5) strongly agree to (1) strongly disagree. Examples included; "Being involved in DCS is/would be an endeavor that is supported and encouraged within my profession;" and, "Counselor educators should focus primarily on scholarship, while practitioners should focus primarily on providing DCS." The authors measured participants' demographics using yes/no and short answer questions. In addition, the final question of the survey asked the participants to share any information about beliefs regarding DCS that were not addressed through the previous questions of this survey. This question resulted in lengthy responses from participants that served to create a significant amount of qualitative data. Fifty-six percent ($n = 84$) of the participants chose to provide written responses, and the vast majority of responses were five or more sentences in length. IRB approval was obtained from both the

University of Wisconsin Oshkosh and Youngstown State University. All pertinent ACA and ACES ethical codes were followed.

The researchers distributed the survey through online survey software Survey Monkey. A pilot survey was sent to 20 pre-tenured Counselor Education faculty in order to create an initial assessment tool. The faculty members' feedback, including grammar and wording changes, was incorporated into the final version of the survey. We distributed the final survey to each of the 560 identified assistant professors as a Survey Monkey email link. After the initial email was sent, we learned that 37 participants needed to be removed from the sample as they had achieved tenure, were adjunct (non tenure-track) professors, or were teaching in other departments besides Counselor Education. Twenty-four participants were removed, as the contact information listed on the corresponding department websites was outdated or incorrect. This left the researchers with a final sample of 499 counselor educators, 150 participated in our study by completing the survey (30% response rate).

Research Design

The authors utilized a survey design to collect the data. As noted by Heppner, Wampold, and Kivlighan (2007), when completing an initial investigation it can be useful to use a survey design. Using a survey approach can also serve in creating direction for future research. After the data were collected, a mixed method research model was employed to create a broader picture of the relationships between pre-tenured assistant professors and DCS. The mixed method research model included both quantitative and qualitative inquiry. The quantitative inquiry included analysis of demographics and comparisons in questions responses between those who are and who are not tenured. The qualitative inquiry included exploring the comments and additional information offered by the participants.

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics were employed to analyze the quantitative data such as means, standard deviations, percentages to explore the demographic data, attitudes regarding engagement in DCS, and perceptions regarding support. Additionally, t-tests were used to explore the differences between those who provide DCS and those who did not, with different demographic characteristics. We employed a MANOVA procedure to examine if there were differences in attitudes and perceptions between those who did participate in DCS and those who did not. The qualitative data were analyzed following a constant comparative method (Strauss & Corbin, 1990; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). We analyzed the participant's comments by noting themes and recurrences following guidelines by Strauss & Corbin (1990). Further analysis of the comments involved repeated coding, comparing, and disaggregating, which were followed by a re-aggregation of data according to thematic categories that emerged. When no additional or new categories emerged, it was determined that saturation had been attained. More detailed information regarding the quantitative and qualitative data analysis is included in the results section.

Results

Quantitative Analysis

Table 1 summarizes the demographics for those who did and did not provide DCS. It should be noted that any deviation from the overall sample n of 150 in totals, percentages or degrees of freedom, is due to a lack of response to that question in particular. The majority of respondents were younger than 45 years old; 60% of those reporting engagement in DCS and 70% of those reporting no engagement in DCS were under 45 years of age. Nearly half of the

sample, 43% (*n* = 64), reported engaging in DCS at some level. Seventy-six percent (*n* = 49) of participants who reported engaging in DCS stated that they provided approximately 1-10 hours of DCS per week. Interestingly, almost half of the participants who reported engaging in DCS, 53% (*n = 39)*, stated that they teach nine or more semester hours. Seventy percent (*n = 105*) of the participants reported holding counseling licensure or certification, meaning that 30% of the sample were unlicensed counselor educators. Forty-eight percent (*n = 72*) of the participants held the highest licensure possible in their states. Participants reported having an average of 9.5 years of DCS experience in their chosen emphasis.

The participants taught in a variety of program tracks with 41% (*n* = 62) in Community/Clinical Mental Health counseling, 37% *(n = 56)* in School Counseling, 7% (*n* = 10) in Marriage/Couples/Family Counseling, 7% (*n* = 10) in Doctoral Programs, 4% (*n* = 6) in Rehabilitation Counseling, 2% *(n = 3)* in Student Affairs, and >1% (*n* = 1) in College Counseling. Participants reported that they completed the following years of service in their current faculty position: 9% *(n=* 13*)* completed one year; 15% *(n* = 22*)* completed two years; 19% (*n = 29)* completed three years; 19% (*n = 29)* completed four years; 13% *(n = 19)* completed five years; and 17% *(n* = 25*)* complete more than 5 years.

Those who reported engagement in DCS as pre-tenured counselor educators also reported having more years of DCS experience in their chosen counseling tracks than those pre-tenured counselor educators reporting no DCS, *t*(136) = 2.59, *p* = .01. Fifty-two percent (*n* = 33*)* of pre-tenured counselor educators who reported current DCS engagement had between six and 15 years experience. Seventy-seven percent (*n* = 49) of current pre-tenured counselor educators reported delivering between 1 and 10 paid and or unpaid hours per week of DCS. Twenty-two percent (*n* = 14) of respondents reporting engagement in DCS indicated that they

are currently unlicensed; the authors interpreted this to mean that these pre-tenured counselor educators are likely in the process of acquiring hours toward licensure or practicing counseling in a state not requiring a counseling license. Thirty-four percent *(n = 29)* of those pre-tenured counselor educators reporting no current DCS also reported not having a practice license; this led the researchers to believe that licensure is not a academic requirement for the position held by these respondents. There was also a significant effect for supervision, $t(122) = 2.69$, $p = .01$, with those pre-tenured counselor educators providing DCS also reporting more engagement in direct supervision with their students than those respondents reporting no DCS provision.

After examining the roles of respondents within their departments and universities, we found that those pre-tenured counselor educators providing DCS also reported teaching more credits per semester, $t(136) = 2.83$, $p = .01$ than those who did not provide DCS. The majority of participants, sixty-five percent ($n = 49$) of DCS providers and thirty-five percent *(n = 48)* of non-DCS providers, reported teaching eight or more credits per semester. The majority of participants noted that research is valued most highly in the tenure process at their respective universities (See Table 1). Approximately half of the research participants (49% for non-DCS providers and 45% for DCS providers) indicated that their departmental colleagues spend most of their efforts on research. In assessing their own schedules, respondents further indicated that they spend the majority of their time in research activities.

Table 1

Demographics of Those Pre-Tenured Counselor Educators That Do and Do Not Provide DCS

	DCS *n = 64*		No DCS *n = 86*	
Gender				
Male	32	50%	27	34%
Female	32	50%	57	66%
Age	*M* = 45.8, *SD* = 10.6		*M* = 42.7, *SD* = 9.3	
Ethnicity				
Asian	4	6%	5	6%
Latino/Hispanic	2	3%	4	5%
African American/Descent	4	6%	10	12%
Native American/Inuit/Indigenous	2	3%	0	0%
Caucasian	51	80%	66	77%
Middle Eastern	1	2%	0	0%
Biracial/Multiracial	1	2%	2	2%
Years Experience providing service	*M* = 11.8, *SD* =8.6		*M* = 8.4, *SD* = 7.7	
Employed off campus for Service				
Yes	20	31%	5	6%
No	44	69%	81	94%
Hours of Service per week				
Paid	*M* = 6.2, *SD* = 6.2		*n* = 0	
Unpaid	*M* = 4.6, *SD* = 2.5		*n* = 0	
Hours of Supervision per Week				
Paid	*M* = 4.6, *SD* = 6.2		*M* = 2.9, *SD* = 2.8	
Unpaid	*M* = 4.1, *SD* = 3.8		*M* = 2.9, *SD* = 2.9	
Licensure				
Yes	50	78%	57	66%
No	14	22%	29	34%
Highest Tier	50	78%	38	44%
Higher Ed Employment Term	*M* = 4.4 Years, *SD* = 1.9		*M* = 3.5 Years, *SD* = 1.7	
	DCS *n = 64*		No DCS *n = 86*	

	DCS *n* = 64			No DCS *n* = 86	
Credits Taught per Semester					
0-3	4	6%		7	8%
4-7	14	22%		23	27%
8-11	24	38%		39	45%
12+	17	27%		9	10%
Blank	5	8%		8	9%
Highest Priority for Tenure					
Research	45	70%		64	74%
Teaching	17	27%		20	23%
Service	1	2%		1	1%

Perceptions of support for direct counseling service. Participants of this study believed their colleagues and departments would support their involvement in DCS (*M* = 3.4, *SD 1.1)*; however, two items appear noteworthy. First, it appears that the majority of participants did not believe DCS would contribute positively to their tenure processes (*M* = 2.6, *SD 1.1)*. Secondly, the participants did not perceive that their colleagues who do engage in DCS are substantially rewarded in their tenure processes for their DCS involvement (*M* = 2.6, *SD 1.1)*. A further examination of the data for possible differences between the perception of support for those that do engage in DCS and those who do not engage in DCS yielded significant results; $F (6, 131) = 3.5$, $p = .002$; Pillai's Trace = 0.16, partial $\eta^2 = .16$ for the entire model. After assessing the follow-up univariate calculations, it seemed as though the majority of the effect is due to a significant difference between DCS providers and non-DCS providers in their perceptions that colleagues providing DCS are more highly respected; $F (1,137) = 15.6$, $p = .001$; Pillai's Trace = .16, partial $\eta^2 = .16$. Participants in this study who provide DCS indicate that their colleagues receive more respect if they are working directly with clients or students in the community. A Bonferroni Correction was used to control for inflated alpha due to multiple univariate calculations.

Attitudes regarding DCS. Respondents indicated that pre-tenured counselor educators should have the freedom to pursue DCS if so desired. Many respondents also seemed to indicate that DCS would positively impact their teaching and scholarly activities, while simultaneously earning them more respect and credibility as an emerging counselor educator. The participants' responses seemed to illustrate some conflict with desiring to engage in DCS, feeling as though DCS might drain them professionally, and uncertainty in how DCS might affect their time management towards tenure. The data were more closely examined for possible differences between the attitudes towards DCS for those that do engage in DCS and those who do not. This examination yielded significant results F (14, 123) = 3.4, p < .001; Pillai's Trace = 0.28, partial η^2 = .28 for the entire model. The follow-up univariate calculations yielded significant results in several areas. A Bonferroni Correction was used to control for inflated alpha due to multiple univariate calculations.

First, DCS providers were more likely to agree that DCS does not hinder their ability to complete their professional responsibilities; benefits their teaching and research; assists them in earning respect in their role as a counselor educator; is part of the professional role of a counselor educator; has the potential to be draining to their overall professional role; can take time away from other important tasks of being a professor if not managed properly; and that counselor educators should have the freedom to provide DCS (See Table 2).

Table 2

Significant *F*-tests for Univariate Follow Up Tests Between DCS and No DCS Means by Attitude

Response Stimulus	MS	*F*	Sig	partial η^2
9. Counselor educators should focus primarily on scholarship, while practitioners should focus primarily on providing direct counseling services.	10.0	13.4*	.00	.09
10. Providing direct counseling services would hinder my ability to engage in teaching and research as a counselor educator.	22.3	16.1*	.00	.11
11. Being involved in direct counseling service would benefit my role as a counselor educator.	6.4	16.0*	.00	.11
14. Providing direct counseling services benefits my teaching and course preparation.	9.0	12.6*	.00	.09
15. Providing direct counseling services gives me more credibility as a counselor educator.	8.8	17.5*	.00	.11
18. Continued experience providing direct counseling services is not necessary now that I am a counselor educator.	12.6	14.0*	.00	.09
20. Providing direct counseling services is/would be draining on my role as a counselor educator.	12.6	10.4*	.00	.07
21. Being involved in direct counseling service takes/would take time and energy away from other efforts that are necessary in advancing my academic career.	14.3	10.4*	.00	.07

Note. Pillai Trace = .28, *df* = 14, *p* < .001.
* Degrees of freedom for each question would be noted as *F*(1, 137)
* indicates significance at *p* < .003.

Qualitative Analysis

As a final component of the survey developed for this study, participants were provided an opportunity to respond to the following prompt; "Please add any information about your beliefs regarding DCS that you were not able to address through the previous questions of this survey." Fifty six percent ($n = 84$) chose to provide a written response regarding DCS, and the majority of responses were lengthy (i.e., five or more sentences). It was apparent to the researchers that the depth and richness of these comments needed to be analyzed more closely. Using procedures derived from grounded theory analysis, participants' comments were analyzed in such a way that particular categories and themes began to emerge from the data (Morrow & Smith, 2000). It is important to note that while the data provided by the open-ended response was analyzed and core categories clearly surfaced, additional and subsequent data collection was not gathered in regard to these initial responses. Following traditional qualitative approaches; further interviews with participants would be conducted and additional data would be gathered, synthesized, analyzed, and conceptualized to construct an emerging theory (Charmaz, 2003).

In spite of the fact that qualitative analysis conducted in this research resulted from analysis of participants' comments from a single point in time, the data derived from this analysis were closely analyzed using open coding procedures to construct categories, properties, and dimensions. Axial coding procedures were employed to explore relationships between categories and to ensure further analysis of participant's open-ended responses.

Four major categories emerged from the analysis that represented participants' opportunity to openly address their meaning-making processes in relation to pre-tenured counselor educators' engagement in direct counseling practice. These categories were conceptualized as *time restrictions, DCS within the tenure process, skill/practice currency,* and

CE (counselor educator) role/identity development. These categories further contained properties in addition to dimensions that described them more fully. Axial coding revealed that participants' responses described relationships between the categories.

Time restrictions. *Time restrictions* was defined as the struggle with time and a sense that there is never enough time to complete all of the tasks required of pre-tenured counselor educators. The following participants' statements serve to illustrate *time restrictions:* "Clinical practice is very important, and does support teaching and research, but also does take time away from teaching and research." Another participant stated, "I believe DCS is important, yet institutions that only regard publications as the mark of a professor make it extremely difficult for someone to fulfill those obligations and hold practice outside of the university. There just isn't enough time in the day." A pre-tenured faculty reported, "Any time doing DCS would have to be done outside regular work hours, which then adds to the work week … Just not enough time to also do direct service." While another stated, "I feel torn between wanting to get back 'in the field' and barely being able to find time to write up research for publication. I'd love to do more, but the demands on my (our) time is just so great!" Similarly another remarked, "Perhaps I didn't ask the right questions in my (job) interview, but with the emphasis on publications and grants, there is no time for clinical work as I'm already putting in way too many hours."

DCS within the tenure process. *DCS within the tenure process* emerged as a second category in the analysis of participants' written comments. As participants described their experiences and perceptions of DCS in light of being pre-tenured faculty members, they discussed how DCS was viewed from the perspectives of the systems in which they belong (e.g., department, college, university). It seemed as though pre-tenured faculty members viewed DCS as more of a risk, if they did not work in a system that was supportive of the practice. Two

distinct properties emerged within this larger category; *system support* and *DCS value perception*. *System support* was identified along a dimension comprising the extremes of positive support and lack of support. Positive support was mentioned, albeit rarely, in participants' comments. The following quote is an example that describes positive support: "I am fortunate to work beside colleagues who actually have their own little practice outside of the university, but I interviewed at many places where the faculty were quite cynical about my desire to eventually return to clinical practice at some point."

Lack of support represented the other dimensional extreme contained within the subtheme *system support*. Lack of support was also commonly noted in participants' comments: "Practice feels critical to my ability to educate, however there is no mechanism for valuing that in terms of promotion/tenure, so it has to be an add-on to everything else if I really care about it." Another participant stated, "In general, untenured faculty are told to publish and minimize any other activity. Tenured faculty members do as they choose. Some focus on teaching and others their private work. Many work on the side but try to hide their outside work. Clearly students appreciate applied work experience."

DCS value perception represented a second subtheme in the category *DCS within the tenure process*. This theme reflected how the study participants believed that DCS would be perceived or valued for tenure. As the following comments suggest, many participants expressing written responses seemed to feel that DCS was not valued as part of their tenure processes: One participant stated, "I would like to spend at least one day a week providing counseling services. This would not be advisable because service is not valued over research. As far as service goes, providing counseling in the community would not be valued as highly as a state or national leadership role in a professional organization. I have resigned myself to the

fact that if I want tenure as a counselor educator, I cannot maintain my role as a counselor/practitioner." Another remarked, "I think providing direct service would be valuable as a counselor educator and wish I could, but my institution would not give me any credit for it and it would only hurt me in pursuing tenure. I hate this situation." Similarly, another counselor educator reflected, "I provide a lot of individual supervision to my students, and, until I achieve tenure, even that feels like a risky career move. While it isn't directly frowned upon, in our department, non-research-based activities aren't well understood."

Skill/Practice Currency. *Skill/Practice Currency* surfaced as a third category in the analysis of how participants experience and perceive their roles in relation to DCS. Participants strongly expressed the idea of staying "current" in the field in their written responses, and the desire to want to be perceived as current by others as counseling practitioners with the latest developments in counseling practice. Two distinct properties emerged within this category: *legitimacy perception*, and *field connection*. The following responses describe more fully the subtheme of *legitimacy perception*: "I am the only non-tenured faculty member, others in the program are tenured and do not consider scholarship, research, or outside counseling as valuable. I think it is valuable to students to actually see counseling from the initial session to termination. I think that direct counseling by faculty should be given more weight; professors in the med school still practice. I think it does lend credibility to what we talk about and do." Another participant stated, "I think counselor educators, at least those involved in practicum/internship, supervision at the doc level and other clinically based courses, should have more experience in counseling. I also see evidence that strong clinical skills are devalued, both in hiring practice and reward systems. Having a year or two of experience is not sufficient, in my view, to adequately train counselors for today's marketplace … I firmly believe that you cannot be as

effective a counselor educator if you are not continuously and simultaneously involved in the provision of DCS."

Field connection represented a second subtheme within the category skill/practice currency, and varied along the dimension of current and outdated connections with the counseling field at large. This subtheme reflected a number of participants' comments that skills and techniques become easily outdated and ineffective if they are not practiced or regularly used. The following comments further capture the *field connection* subtheme along the current dimension: One participant stated, "Seeing clients is essential to my ability to stay 'fresh' in the field and be 'current' in my teaching." A participant stated, "Being a provider of mental health services helps keep me 'fresh' in the profession - and increases credibility with my students." Similarly another stated, "I am ashamed that counselor educators are not required to practice at least 5 or 10 hours per week. Rather than allowing faculty to teach four courses per semester - so their skills as a practitioner or efforts as a researcher are hindered. We should all be required to practice. Our profession is not like others; either you use it or you lose it."

In contrast, the comments that follow serve to reflect the *field connection* subtheme along the dimension of outdated: "At our university we have several faculty members who have not 'practiced' in over 10 years. The students frequently comment on the fact that they do not feel that these individuals 'get it' and report in some of our 'clinical sections' that the faculty member's perspective is sometimes not current to today's cultural and societal based shifts in the fields of both community and school counseling." While another pre-tenured faculty reflected, "Nothing is worse than a professor telling stories about what counseling and therapy was like 20 years ago (the last time s/he saw a client). Staying current in the field always has to include some amount of providing therapy or counseling."

CE (counselor educator) role/identity development. CE role/identity development represents the final category reflected in participants' written responses. This final category embodies a number of responses that identified DCS as an integral component of who they see themselves becoming as emerging counselor educators. In addition, analysis revealed the properties of modeling and symbiotic relationships as further describing counselor educator role development. Essentially, *modeling* represents that pre-tenured faculty should not only talk about being a counselor to their students, but also make every effort to develop their own skills through DCS. The following statements demonstrate modeling in relationship to roles as a counselor educator: One participant stated, "I absolutely, positively believe that counselor educators should be required to be licensed in the state in which they teach. What kind of a role model are we if we don't - that gives the message to our students 'Do as I say not as I do.' I have very strong feelings about counselor educators who teach others how to be counselors but then don't practice themselves." A pre-tenured counselor educator reported, "I am still settling in to things but my goal is to return to practice in my community within four years. Yes, it will be hard but I am committed to doing this. I see it as essential. I can be a good role model in the classroom but it doesn't stop there and any counselor who believes it does, doesn't fully understand their professional identity." Another participant remarked, "The most influential role models in both, my master's and doctoral training programs were those counselor educators who kept their skills and community awareness current through the provision of DCS. I intend to follow their lead and to be back in the field practicing during my second year here. It is a priority for me."

Symbiotic relationships represented a second subtheme within the category of CE role/identity development. In essence, the subtheme of symbiotic relationships captures the idea

conveyed by participants that engagement in DCS has the potential to positively affect teaching and research and vice versa. The following comments reflect the symbiotic relationships subtheme: "I find myself getting involved with the community agencies but in ways that my students can participate and get hands on experience prior to field placements!" Another remarked, "It [DCS] benefits every single class I teach as I use examples from that day and the students can follow along (ethically) with my cases." While another stated, "Personally, I believe there is a reciprocal relationship between research, practice and teaching. Each function has the potential to improve the other." Finally, one participant reinforced the value of direct counseling service, "It [DCS] significantly affects my teaching knowledge and pedagogy. I miss it drastically and the longer I am away from it, the more I feel out of touch with reality."

Discussion

In this study, 150 pre-tenured counselor education assistant professors from institutions across the United States provided responses to a questionnaire designed to gauge how they perceive and are engaged in direct counseling service. After assessing the collected responses through both quantitative and qualitative lenses, particular themes became evident.

Participants consistently reported struggles to find balance in their positions, primarily in regard to managing internal politics within their departments or universities, developing new courses, and finding adequate time to develop and pursue scholarship. Assistant professors who reported being mostly dissatisfied in their positions across time were those that experienced a sense of workload strife among their program faculty, incongruence in what was expected of them, insensitivity to their personal needs, and lack of support leading to feeling isolated. Conversely, assistant professors in counselor education that reported greater satisfaction over time were those who felt supported and mentored, who felt a sense of "fit" with their

departments, institutions, institutional location, and who had a clearer idea regarding the expectations and requirements for tenure and promotion (Magnuson et al., 2004).

There appears to be a true desire on the part of respondents to engage in direct counseling service. This is consistent with the literature that has described the desire of new faculty to enhance their own clinical skills and, if possible and applicable, also work toward a level of counseling licensure within their states (DiLillo et al., 2006; Himelein & Putnam, 2001). The current research also identified some significant themes related to how pre-tenured counselor educators view or experience DCS which include: feeling significant restrictions on time to be able to pursue DCS; lack of departmental or institutional support to pursue DCS; little value placed on DCS within tenure processes; the idea that skill and practice remain current as a result of a DCS connection; the sense that DCS lends credibility to both teaching and research endeavors; and feeling that DCS plays an important role in the evolving identity of counselor educators who are new in their faculty careers. While the vast majority of respondents desired more opportunity for DCS, most also expressed feeling resigned to the fact that they would need to wait until receiving tenure for increased freedom and opportunity for engaging in DCS.

Limitations

The convenience sample, rather than a random sample for this current research needs to be taken into consideration when considering generalizability. The nature of the research may have influenced those who chose to respond; in other words, the topic of this research may have naturally drawn respondents who felt strongly about the DCS while those who felt less compelled by this topic may have chosen to not respond. This can obviously skew the data and the implications of the ensuing results. While we took precautions to avoid bias, the researchers were all conducting DCS during the time this study so our interpretation could have been

influenced the way we interpreted the results. Lastly, while rich qualitative data was analyzed by the researchers, it is important to note that since this was an exploratory survey with only one round of comments assessed, the categories could be developed further. In future research, a qualitative study could be conducted to better understand the emerging categories that could be assessed through additional interviews.

Implications and Recommendations

The results from this current study may offer guidance for counselor educators in-training, applicants for new counselor education positions, new counselor educators, and veteran counselor educators. The findings provide opportunities for those in doctoral programs to examine their expectations for the field and determine if their expectations are realistic. The findings support properly researching the positions when applicants are applying to determine the culture and expectations of institutions, colleges, and specific counselor education departments. Applicants might consider approaching their selection process as collaborative, where they are interviewing departments at the same time that they are being interviewed. While there is obvious eagerness on the part of counselor educators to secure positions upon graduation, care should be exercised in making an effort to find an appropriate "fit" for employment (Magnuson et al., 2009).

During interview procedures, topics that applicants might explore include workload; expectations for scholarship, teaching, and service; specific requirements and expectations for tenure and promotion; program philosophies; potential for mentoring; working environment and dynamics within the department; and opportunities for DCS. For current pre-tenured counselor educators, it appears from this research that there are colleagues in the field that have created opportunities for DCS to compliment teaching and research/scholarship endeavors. While it can

be a challenging endeavor, it appears that there are pre-tenured faculty who have made convincing cases for building DCS into their tenure processes.

The journey toward tenure can be challenging and complex (Austin & Rice, 1998; Cohen et al., 2003; Himelein & Putnam, 2001), and the existing research indicates that new counselor educators are often expected to "hit the ground running" (Magnuson et al., 2001). New faculty are also faced with figuring out the roles that they are required to serve in academic settings, in addition to navigating the tenure and renewal processes within their institutions. The current research reflects that there are a number of perceived benefits and challenges for pre-tenured counselor educators who engaged in direct counseling services.

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