

2021

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Recommended Citation

Hall, D. P., Waalkes, P. L., & Smith, P. H. (2021). A content analysis of counselor educators' teaching philosophy statements. *The Journal of Counselor Preparation and Supervision*, 14(1). Retrieved from <https://repository.wcsu.edu/jcps/vol14/iss1/3>

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Abstract

An educator's teaching philosophy can have a direct impact on student learning and many counselor educators report feeling underprepared in the development of their teaching philosophy. Utilizing conventional qualitative content analysis, the authors analyzed counselor educators' ($N = 15$) teaching philosophy statements to understand how they described and structured their teaching philosophies. Emergent categories included theoretical influences on teaching, facilitation of learning strategies, student learning goals, developmental process as a teacher, and beliefs about teaching and learning. Developing a more specific theoretical orientation may help counselor educators intentionally approach their teaching in ways that could lead to better learning outcomes for counselors-in-training.

Keywords

Pedagogy, teaching, teaching philosophy, teaching development

Many beginning counselor educators have reported that teaching is challenging in their first few years as a faculty member. They can feel overwhelmed and lacking in focus in the time and energy-consuming process of teaching and often improve their teaching mostly through trial and error (Magnuson, 2002; Magnuson et al., 2004). In higher education broadly, beginning college teachers are sometimes egocentric, focused on proving their content mastery while paying little attention to students' learning (Robertson, 1999). They often use a rapid-fire lecture approach, presenting large amounts of content in a structured manner (Boice, 1991; Jones, 2008). This egocentric focus may be rooted in educators' lack of awareness of instructional theory. As teachers grow, they often become less focused on themselves and more focused on their students and their educational contexts (McDonald & Kahn, 2014; Robertson, 1999). Instructors who hold less sophisticated epistemological beliefs and reflective predispositions are often more task and procedure focused, more focused on student memorization and recitation of content, and less likely to develop student-centered perspectives on teaching (McDonald & Kahn, 2014). Spending time thinking through their teaching philosophies can help educators become more intentional in centering their teaching on their students' learning (McDonald & Kahn, 2014).

Teaching philosophy statements are often a central component of hiring procedures for counselor educators since many search committees require teaching philosophy statements (Hall & Hulse, 2010). They are also a tool for reflecting on teaching and theory. Yet, there is a lack of research about how counselor educators approach their teaching philosophy statements.

Teaching Philosophy Statements

Many in academia view the primary purpose of teaching philosophy statements as an assessment tool in faculty hiring processes, award decisions, and faculty evaluations. According to one study, approximately 57% of faculty search committees across disciplines requested

teaching statements of their candidates (Meizlish & Kaplan, 2008). Hiring search committees typically request teaching philosophy statements to understand if candidates are a good fit for the institution/department as well as how they teach and how much they have thought about teaching (Meizlish & Kaplan, 2008). Search committee chairs view successful teaching philosophy statements as those that provide concrete examples of teaching practice instead of generic statements full of platitudes that are not rooted in the candidate's teaching experience (Meizlish & Kaplan, 2008).

Aside from being a tool in the hiring process, teaching philosophy statements can also facilitate growth in teaching. Educators can write and update their teaching philosophy statements to define themselves as teachers and to reflect on their beliefs about teaching and learning. Numerous researchers have argued that teaching philosophy statements should be living documents that are continuously updated throughout educators' careers for the purposes of reflecting on and growing in teaching (Kearns & Sullivan, 2011; Medina & Draugalis, 2013; Yoem et al., 2018).

The dual purpose of teaching philosophy statements as ongoing reflexive tools and as moment-in-time utilitarian tools in the job search process may be at odds. For example, the fact that search committees expect concrete evidence of teaching effectiveness in teaching philosophy statements may preclude more detailed discussions of philosophy. This task and procedure orientation of teaching philosophy statements used in hiring procedures may inhibit counselor educators' development of more sophisticated epistemological beliefs and reflective predispositions (McDonald & Kahn, 2014).

Most researchers examining teaching philosophy statements have focused on providing advice on writing them from a utilitarian perspective. Often offering concrete guidance on specific

information to include without discussing teaching theory in-depth, numerous researchers have published articles providing guides on how to write a teaching philosophy statement (Eierman, 2008; Kearns & Sullivan, 2011; Medina & Draugalis, 2013; Yoem et al., 2018). Yet, few researchers have taken a broader and more critical look at how faculty in higher education integrate philosophy into their teaching statements. With these often competing contexts, understanding how counselor educators infuse philosophy into their teaching statements may help illuminate ways to improve the integration of teaching and theory in counselor education.

Teaching Philosophy in Counselor Education

As a whole, researchers in counselor education have not integrated instructional or pedagogical theory into their research on teaching (Barrio Minton et al., 2014). In Barrio Minton and colleagues' (2014) content analysis of peer-reviewed articles published within a ten year period (2001-2010) on teaching and learning in counselor education, only about 15% of the articles examined were clearly grounded in learning theory or instructional research. Instead, the majority of these articles were grounded in education theory in only a cursory way or not grounded in theory at all. In their follow up study examining articles published between 2011 and 2015, Barrio Minton, Watcher Morris, and Bruner (2018) discovered the percentage of articles with a clear pedagogical foundation had increased from 15% to 22% since the previous study and a higher percentage of articles focused on pedagogical practices (from 9% to 22%). Despite these improvements, only a fraction of articles were clearly founded in pedagogy.

Counselor education doctoral teaching preparation programs also seem to fall short in preparing students to integrate theory into teaching. Many have argued for more consistency and structure to developing teaching philosophy in doctoral teaching preparation in counselor education programs (Baltrinic et al., 2016; Barrio Minton et al., 2014; Barrio Minton et al., 2018;

Hall, 2016; Hall & Hulse, 2010; Waalkes et al., 2018). Hall and Hulse (2010) found that counselor educators reported feeling better prepared by their doctoral teaching preparation when it included discussions with faculty about teaching philosophies. Yet, in a qualitative study on beginning counselor educators' experiences of doctoral teaching preparation, many participants reported not feeling adequately prepared by their doctoral teaching preparation in terms of andragogy and teaching philosophy (Waalkes et al., 2018). Counselor educators have also reported struggling to integrate their teaching philosophies into online course environments (Hall, 2016).

Yet, currently, there is a lack of research on the theoretical grounding of counselor educators' teaching philosophy statements to help guide doctoral teaching preparation. In addition to their widespread use for career advancement purposes, writing teaching philosophy statements is an important opportunity for counselor educators to reflect on and refine their philosophies on teaching and learning and root their teaching in theory. Having a clearer picture of what counselor educators currently include in their teaching philosophy statements could help illuminate how counselor educators and counselor educators-in-training are integrating philosophy into teaching. Exploring this aspect of the teaching process is a critical step in more intentional and meaningful integration of theory into teaching that may enhance the learning of counselors-in-training. Therefore, in the present exploratory study, we sought to answer the following research questions: (a) How do counselor educators describe their teaching philosophies?, (b) What are common categories across counselor educators' teaching philosophies?, and (c) How do counselor educators structure their teaching philosophy statements?

For the purpose of this study, *teaching philosophy* refers to the underlying philosophical beliefs about how students learn. *Teaching theory* refers to empirically based approaches to

connecting philosophical beliefs to teaching practice. *Teaching philosophy statement* refers to a document written describing an instructor's beliefs about teaching and learning.

Method

Using conventional content analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005), we analyzed counselor educators' teaching philosophy statements ($N = 15$). Given the limited empirical literature on teaching theory in counselor education, conventional content analysis was chosen to qualitatively describe counselor educators' teaching philosophies without preconceived notions. Although numerous researchers have explored teaching theory outside of the field of counselor education, teaching counseling is distinctive from other fields in that the focus is not just on knowledge acquisition and cognitive skills, but also on developing interpersonal skills like active listening and empathy. Therefore, counselor educators likely tailor their teaching philosophies to help students develop these specialized skills.

Research Team

Our research team consisted of three members who are also the three authors of this study. The three authors identify as white male counselor educators. Two live and work in the Southeastern United States and one lives in the Midwest. Each of us has multiple years of experience teaching in counselor education and has worked on multiple qualitative research projects. The first two authors conducted the data analysis and the third author served as an external auditor.

Participants and Data Acquisition

Random, criterion sampling was utilized to recruit tenure-track counselor educators from Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) accredited counselor education programs. Tenure-track faculty were selected because the career goals and

teaching philosophy statements of non-tenure-track faculty are likely different from those of tenure-track faculty. Typically, tenure-track faculty need to articulate and defend their teaching philosophy as a part of the tenure process, so focusing on this population could create a more homogeneous sample due to common experiences. The authors randomly selected 40 CACREP-accredited counselor education programs from a list of all CACREP-accredited programs. After receiving institutional review board approval, we gathered emails for all tenure-track counselor education faculty from program websites and emailed an invitation to participate. Two weeks later, potential participants were sent a follow-up email reminding them of the opportunity to participate. Once they agreed to take part in the study, participants completed a brief questionnaire administered in SurveyMonkey and uploaded their teaching philosophy statements.

A total of 373 faculty members were contacted and 15 sent their teaching philosophy statements (4% response rate). We did not approach this study with a pre-determined sample size since it depended upon the depth of our data and the purposes of our study (Patton, 2015). Although this response rate is low, the sample size of 15 was determined to be adequate since we had achieved saturation (Elo et al., 2014; Patton, 2015). Additionally, since the participants were fairly homogeneous and the thematic structure revealed depth in how counselor educators describe their teaching philosophies, we determined that a larger sample size might not be needed (Elo et al., 2014; Patton, 2015).

Participants were between the ages of 27 and 71 ($M = 46$, $SD = 14.76$). Thirteen participants identified as White, one identified as Asian, and one identified as Hispanic/Latino. Nine participants identified as male and six as female. Participants' years of experience in counselor education ranged from one to 37 ($M = 12$, $SD = 12.59$). Two-thirds ($n = 10$) of participants were Assistant Professors and five were full Professors.

In addition to sending their teaching philosophy statements, participants completed a questionnaire including questions regarding demographic information, the purpose of updating their teaching philosophy statements, and how their teaching philosophy has evolved over time. Six participants updated their teaching philosophy statements for job applications, six for promotion and tenure processes, two for teaching awards, and one for personal reflection on their teaching. In describing how their teaching philosophies have developed over time, numerous participants ($n = 6$) noted developing a greater focus on and trust in students. Four participants mentioned developing greater congruence between their philosophies and their teaching practices and four participants mentioned that their teaching techniques have changed. Four participants said that their teaching philosophy had not evolved over time.

Data Analysis

We analyzed teaching philosophy statements using conventional content analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005), allowing categories to emerge from the data without imposing a preset theoretical perspective. The first two authors served as the primary coders and the third author served as an auditor (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). We defined the unit of analysis as each participants' teaching philosophy statement ($N = 15$). The word count of the statements totaled 10339 words and ranged from 161 to 1561 ($M = 689$, $SD = 434.62$). Seven teaching philosophy statements (47%) included at least one citation. Citation frequency ranged from zero to 19 ($M = 4.4$, $SD = 4.8$).

First, to gain immersion in the data and allow categories to emerge from the data, the two primary researchers coded the first five teaching philosophy statements as a pilot. As recommended by Hsieh & Shannon (2005), the two primary coders independently read every word of each of these five teaching philosophy statements three times. During the third independent

reading of each of these statements, both researchers broke every part of the statement into separate units (categories) and labeled each category into a more concise word or phrase. While developing these labels, the researchers attempted to bracket their biases to provide an accurate representation of participants' words. The entirety of each statement was coded without omitting any part. These labels served as definitions of each category (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Second, the two researchers met over a series of three meetings to discuss the results of this coding process line by line and reached consensus both in terms of unitization and the label for each unit. Third, the two primary researchers sent the coded statements and labels to the auditor for his feedback. The two primary researchers decided to further break up the units in numerous places and changed the wording of numerous labels based on the auditor's feedback. For example, the auditor provided feedback that the label of *sharing personal experiences* did not indicate whether the counselor educator or student had shared personal experiences so two distinct labels were developed to represent *educator sharing personal experiences* and *student sharing personal experiences*.

Fourth, the two primary researchers divided the remaining ten teaching philosophy statements equally and each coded their half independently using a similar process as was used for the pilot. Fifth, across four meetings, both primary researchers came together to discuss their unitization and labeling and achieved consensus. Sixth, the auditor reviewed the coding of the final ten statements and provided feedback. Once again, the primary researchers shifted the unitization and the phrasing of the labels in several places based on his suggestions. Ultimately, this process resulted in 418 unique labeled units. Seventh, across 5 meetings, the two primary researchers placed all of the labels into one document for categorization, including collapsing almost identical labels into one category. This resulted in 265 unique sub-categories. In a subsequent meeting, these sub-categories were further reduced to 131 by combining similar sub-categories together. For

example, the subcategories of *theories of teaching* and *theories of change* were combined to form *theories of teaching, learning, and change*. Eighth, the auditor reviewed this list of sub-categories and suggested changing the wording of numerous sub-categories for clarity and breaking a number of sub-categories apart which included multiple ideas.

Ninth, the two primary researchers independently brainstormed a list of clusters (categories) to provide structure to the sub-categories (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Tenth, over three meetings, the two primary researchers shared their independent work and reached consensus on a list of five umbrella categories and placed each of the sub-categories into these clusters. Between all five categories, the final list of sub-categories totaled 19. In meetings with the two primary researchers, the consensus process was used to establish trustworthiness (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Patton, 2015) and ultimately resulted in 100% agreement in the final category and sub-category list between the two primary researchers.

Trustworthiness

We took several steps to increase trustworthiness. First, we engaged in ongoing bracketing, where the first and second authors documented and discussed our experiences with and beliefs about teaching theory and teaching philosophy statements (Patton, 2015). We were passionate about teaching theory and did not feel that teaching theory development is emphasized enough in counselor education. We also assumed that participants would be more likely to discuss the logistics of classroom activities and assignments and less likely to talk about their teaching in terms of educational theory in their teaching philosophy statements. These beliefs were an ongoing topic of discussion throughout the data analysis process to enhance trustworthiness by preventing personal bias from influencing the data analysis. Second, we used a team of two researchers with different theoretical approaches to teaching to provide analyst triangulation (Hsieh & Shannon,

2005; Patton, 2015). Our data analysis process also involved group consensus building to account for both perspectives (Patton, 2015). The consensus process involved intentionally challenging perceptions of the data to strengthen the connection between the data and the emergent categories. Third, we analyzed each teaching philosophy statement numerous times to achieve prolonged engagement with the data (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). An external auditor served as another means of ensuring trustworthiness (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Patton, 2015). The external auditor had expertise in conducting content analysis research and provided an objective analysis of the primary researchers' data analysis.

Results

In the present exploratory study, we sought to answer the following research questions: (a) How do counselor educators describe their teaching philosophies?; (b) What are common categories across counselor educators' teaching philosophies?; and (c) How do counselor educators structure their teaching philosophy statements?

Content Analysis

Five overarching categories emerged from our content analysis process: theoretical influences on teaching, facilitation of learning strategies, student learning goals, developmental process as a teacher, and beliefs about teaching and learning (Table 1).

The theoretical influences on teaching category included any text where participants named specific theories or education models (e.g., learning styles, Boyer's model, Fink's learning dimensions). Participants mentioned numerous theories including constructivism ($n = 5$), experiential learning ($n = 5$), feminism ($n = 2$), and humanism ($n = 2$). Some participants linked counseling-related theories (e.g., Adlerian theory, person-centered teaching) to their teaching. For example, without naming other theories, one participant stated that their teaching approach was

“person-centered in that I accept, respect, and honor the adults I am entrusted to accompany on their life-long learning path.” Some participants used a theory as a thesis to guide their statement. For example, one counselor educator stated at the beginning of their teaching statement, “constructivism is a philosophy of learning that is student centered and based on the premise that learners construct understanding through personal experience.” In much of the rest of their statement, they laid out the four guiding principles they believed as a constructivist educator. Others mentioned their theory in passing and spent most of the rest of their statements describing how they taught. For example, one participant started their teaching statement by stating, “my perspective on teaching is rooted in the Constructivist philosophy of education. I believe that learning occurs in the interactions between the students and myself.” For the remainder of their statement, this participant discussed teaching techniques they used and the impact these techniques have on students without explaining how those techniques are constructivist.

The facilitation of learning strategies category contained a wide array of teaching techniques used by participants, often described in concrete and specific ways. This category demonstrated both the diversity of strategies that participants described and the common threads across multiple statements. Some subcategories (e.g., relationships with students, social learning, tailoring teaching to student needs) established the way participants viewed teaching and learning as a social endeavor. One participant described how students and educators “are not intellectual islands unto ourselves because we simply cannot do it all on our own.” Other participants focused on ways of engaging students, including tailoring teaching to student needs, relating content to a real-world context, and providing students with varied learning experiences. In this vein, one participant wrote, “I think it is essential to tap into as many senses in the classroom as possible and to make the classroom warm and welcoming.” Finally, this category also included the

subcategories of assessment, promoting cognitive development of students, and promoting professional and personal growth.

The student learning goals category indicated the ways that participants aimed to help students develop certain skills, attitudes, beliefs, and knowledge. These aims revolved around a diversity of topics, such as professional identity, multicultural competence and advocacy, and development of self-awareness. For example, one participant discussed how they wanted their students to “explore themselves and begin to conceptually as well as practically integrate their newfound professional identity as counselors.” Many participants discussed these learning outcomes in individual cognitive ways. For example, one participant described encouraging “students to think critically about . . . large impersonal issues. Once they show a level of comfort in critical thinking, I begin to have them critically evaluate themselves through reflection papers and journals.” Participants also often wanted students to apply their learning. One participant believed “in pulling back the curtain in helping students understand what are sometimes discrepancies between theory/textbook and real-world application when the rubber meets the road.”

The category of developmental process as a teacher exemplified the importance of the reflective process in continued growth as a counselor educator. Subcategories within this category included participants’ process of reflecting on their teaching as well as strategies used to promote growth and balance. One participant intentionally sought out feedback from students to grow in their teaching: “throughout the semester, I encourage students to share any thoughts or concerns about the course by either scheduling a meeting with me outside of class or providing constructive feedback on the midterm evaluation.” Some participants described the ways that teaching was

personal for them and offered a description of their reflective stance. For example, one such participant stated,

I leave reflective space for myself to learn from every classroom experience and to develop as an educator through my interactions with each student. I am an instructor who is willing to recognize and admit the limits of my knowledge and thus I enjoy engaging in mutual opportunities for growth with my students.

Another participant described how they balance their life to remain more effective as a teacher:

Teaching is but one part of my life and so I take care to stay healthy, be optimistic, continuously read, attend conferences, and interact with colleagues and my family and friends so that I am at my best every time I step into the classroom.

Finally, the beliefs about teaching and learning category included numerous participant statements on their general perceptions of teaching and learning. Two subcategories emerged within this category. Statements within the learning goes beyond coursework subcategory reflected participants' beliefs about how learning is about more than grades or how it is important for students to develop as lifelong learners. For example, one participant stated, "truly successful learners do not limit their education to the classroom or to their academic careers." Other participants outlined their beliefs about how the impact of learning extends beyond individual knowledge and skill acquisition. One such participant discussed how students should care about their education in ways that go "beyond getting a good grade." Within the other theme, participants talked about the way teaching is a process, how students are more important than the teacher, how teaching theory is as important as counseling theory, and how curiosity leads to empathy.

Table 1*Categories and subcategories of counselor educators' teaching philosophy statements*

Categories	Subcategories
Theoretical influences on teaching	Educational models Theories of teaching, learning, and change
Facilitation of learning strategies	Assessment Promoting the development of cognitive skills Promoting professional and personal growth Relationships with students Relating content to a real world context Social learning Tailoring teaching to student needs Varied learning experiences
Student learning goals	Developing thinking abilities Knowledge of self Multicultural competence and advocacy Professional responsibilities
Developmental process as a teacher	Developing teaching identity Role development Strategies for growing in teaching
Beliefs about teaching and learning	Learning goes beyond coursework Other

Structural Analysis

There was little consistency in overall structure across participants' teaching philosophy statements. Some participants used a clear structure of naming an important concept (e.g., mastery of the material, modeling), followed by an example of how they facilitate that concept with students. Other participants' statements lacked a clear thematic structure, frequently changing between topics. One participant used a narrative approach to writing their teaching philosophy statement, beginning and ending the statement with a story of a particular interaction with a student.

Some participants ($n = 6$) named ideas or terminology indicative of specific teaching theories without overtly naming the theory itself. For example, principles of constructivist andragogy, such as co-constructed learning and integrating new and existing knowledge, appeared in three statements without a direct reference to constructivism. Similarly, most participants did not cite research literature in their teaching philosophy statements. Also, some participants named a particular theory at the beginning of their statement but provided little to no explanation of the tenants of that theory. These statements often named a theory in the first sentence or two and then transitioned to descriptions of classroom activities or assignments.

Discussion

Overall, participants described their teaching as a relational, student-centered style. They indicated an awareness of and sensitivity towards students' needs as learners. As evident by the categories in the developmental process as a teacher category, many participants were willing to improve their teaching through self-reflection similar to what numerous scholars have recommended (Kearns & Sullivan, 2011; Medina & Draugalis, 2013; Yoem et al., 2018). In the facilitation of learning strategies category, participants discussed a variety of learning strategies and classroom activities that promoted student-centered, social, and authentic learning. As educators, participants did not view themselves solely as experts disseminating knowledge to students, but instead as facilitators of learning where students are active participants in the process. Additionally, as seen in the student learning goals category, numerous participants pointed out that training students as skilled professional counselors motivated their teaching.

Many participants' teaching philosophy statements did not name specific teaching theories or describe the philosophical foundations of their teaching. Instead, similar to Barrio Minton and colleague's (2014; 2018) findings of the lack of clear and specific theoretical grounding of teaching

in counselor education research, some participants' teaching philosophy statements demonstrated simplistic understandings of teaching theory that were not grounded in empirical evidence. As evident by the fact that the theory-oriented categories (i.e., theoretical influences on teaching and beliefs about teaching) contained less data than the more procedure-focused categories (i.e., facilitation of learning strategies and student learning goals), participants were more likely to describe their teaching in terms of activities or strategies than they were to describe the theory behind those strategies. Often descriptions of complex theories were presented in underdeveloped or reductionist ways without elaboration (e.g., constructivism means that students are constructing their own knowledge). This dynamic may be reflective of the lack of doctoral preparation supporting the integration of theory and teaching (Hall, 2016; Waalkes et al., 2018). The majority of participants reported that they had last updated their teaching philosophy statements for the purpose of a job application, tenure and promotion, or an award. By focusing on demonstrating their instructional methods, participants may have tailored their statements based on the perceived criteria of their evaluators in these contexts in ways that might have conflicted with more meaningful integrations of theory (McDonald & Kahn, 2014).

Although participants described a number of theoretical influences on their teaching in their philosophy statements, mention of a specific teaching theory was lacking in some statements. Seven participants did not name any teaching theories in their statements. Some of these participants used terminology or ideas related to theories but did not name them specifically (e.g., saying, "students should learn from experience in the classroom" without mentioning experiential learning). Additionally, many participants did not explicitly discuss the connection between their teaching strategies and theory. Similar to researchers on teaching in counselor education (Barrio Minton et al., 2014; Barrio Minton et al., 2018), numerous participants ($n = 6$) described their

teaching philosophy using counseling or supervision theory (e.g., Adlerian theory, person-centered theory). Despite the value of connecting counseling and supervision theory to teaching, this fact may indicate that some counselor educators are not versed enough in teaching theory to name specific educational theories that influence their teaching practice, even as numerous researchers have argued that discussions of theory are important to the development of teaching (Hall, 2016; Hall & Hulse, 2010; Waalkes et al., 2018).

The underdeveloped integration of theory into their statements may show that participants had not developed the knowledge required to integrate theory into their teaching. Many counselor educators have reported not feeling well-prepared to integrate theory into their teaching (Hall, 2016; Waalkes et al., 2018) and numerous researchers have advocated for more consistent and structured doctoral teaching preparation in counselor education (Baltrinic et al., 2016; Barrio Minton et al., 2014; Barrio Minton et al., 2018; Hall & Hulse, 2010; Waalkes et al., 2018). Constructing teaching philosophies is part of the developmental process for beginning college educators to become less centered on themselves and more centered on intentionally designing learning experiences for students (McDonald & Kahn, 2014; Robertson, 1999). Lacking theoretical grounding may impede counselor educators from moving beyond viewing their teaching in terms of disseminating content and designing activities and more into the realm of holistic and intentional instructional design (McDonald & Kahn, 2014).

Since the majority of participants last revised their teaching philosophy statement for the purpose of professional advancement (e.g., a job application, tenure and promotion), it is unclear if counselor educators are using their teaching philosophy statements as part of an ongoing process of reflecting upon their teaching (Kearns & Sullivan, 2011; Medina & Draugalis, 2013; Yoem et al., 2018). Although some participants described their process of their teaching development in

their statements, many omitted this developmental perspective. Overall, participants were more likely to offer descriptions of their current abilities as teachers than to discuss their growth as teachers.

Implications

The findings of this study may illuminate a number of gaps in doctoral teaching preparation for counselor educators. Since many doctoral students in counselor education teach after graduating and are often required to think about their teaching philosophy, doctoral counselor education programs should expose their students to a variety of theories of teaching and learning (CACREP, 2016; Hall & Hulse, 2010; Waalkes et al., 2018). For doctoral students with limited teaching experience, it may be difficult to conceptualize a teaching philosophy (Eierman, 2008). Counselor educators might use models of theoretical development related to counselors-in-training (e.g., Halbur & Halbur, 2015) to guide the development of integrating theory into teaching. Halbur and Halbur (2015) presented the Intentional Theory Selection (ITS) model of counselor theoretical development, which includes sequential stages that help counselors link their personal philosophies of life and change with congruent evidence-based counseling theories. Utilizing this type of structured theoretical framework for teaching philosophy development could help doctoral students draw upon their life, educational, and counseling experiences to begin developing a teaching philosophy.

The purpose of this study was not to develop recommendations for what should be contained in teaching philosophy statements. However, the lack of theoretical depth in participants' teaching philosophy statements might encourage counselor educators and counselor education doctoral students to intentionally reflect and articulate their underlying beliefs about teaching and learning that drive their approach to teaching. Similar to counseling theoretical

development, the development of teaching philosophy is a unique combination of personal perspectives and experiences and empirically supported teaching theory and strategies (Halbur & Halbur, 2015; Kearns & Sullivan, 2011; Medina & Draugalis, 2013). Given the ubiquitousness of teaching philosophy statements, they are an opportunity to reflect and clearly articulate these underlying philosophical elements of teaching.

Counselor educators should challenge doctoral students to integrate theory into their teaching philosophy statements with depth in addition to presenting their teaching in task-oriented terms. For example, instructors of doctoral teaching classes may ask students to write teaching philosophy statements and get feedback on their statements through a structured peer-review process with a focus on theoretical depth. This process may include having peer reviewers who compare and contrast theories used in teaching philosophy statements. Such a process might help doctoral students understand the integration of a wider variety of theories into their teaching and help them clarify their own theoretical viewpoints. Additionally, although CACREP requires that counselor education programs address theories of adult learning in their curriculum (CACREP, 2016), there is scant empirical evidence of how programs are integrating teaching theory into their doctoral teaching preparation programs.

Beyond doctoral programs, counselor educators can view the development of their teaching philosophies as a dynamic and intentional process (Kearns & Sullivan, 2011; Medina & Draugalis, 2013; Yoem et al., 2018). They may choose to form teaching philosophy discussion groups with colleagues, continue to expand their knowledge of different theories, or seek feedback on their teaching philosophy statements from peers. Additionally, they may wish to revise their teaching philosophy statements at regular intervals for the purpose of developing their teaching. In these

revisions, it may be beneficial to slow down and think critically about their statements and about how they have grown as teachers since they last revised them.

The lack of theoretical focus in participants' teaching philosophy statements raises questions about their processes of ongoing theoretical development. Interestingly, even though participants discussed many parts of their developmental process as teachers, theoretical development was not specifically named in any participant's statement as part of that process. Since ongoing teaching philosophy development is not regulated in the same manner as other aspects of the counseling field (e.g., licensing and credentialing through state and national agencies), counselor education programs may benefit from providing structure for the ongoing theoretical development of their faculty. This could provide a continuous developmental process for teaching similar to continuing education units (CEUs) required by many licensing and credentialing agencies in the counseling field.

Limitations

Although we reached saturation and depth in our data, our low response rate of 4% and relatively small sample of 15 participants are a limitation of our study. A larger sample may have helped add more depth and a wider variety of perspectives on teaching philosophy to our findings. Additionally, the low response rate may indicate a lack of wide transferability of our findings since most participants may have felt their teaching philosophy statement was worthy of submitting or have had a stronger focus on integrating philosophy in their teaching.

Teaching philosophy statements do not represent the totality of ways that participants think about their teaching and, therefore, may not provide a complete picture of participants' abilities in integrating theory into their teaching. For example, components of participants' theoretical grounding that they were not actively aware of while writing their teaching philosophy statements

may come out in their teaching practice. Additionally, it seems possible that participants viewed their teaching philosophy statements as a means to an end (e.g., a job). If participants viewed their statements as a self-reflection tool to improve their teaching, they may have spent more time reflecting upon and developing their theoretical orientation. Participants also represented a wide range of years of experience as counselor educators and, therefore, it is difficult to form conclusions about current practices in doctoral teaching preparation based on our findings. This range of years of experience as a counselor educator might have influenced the structure and content of participants' teaching philosophy statements, although no clear distinctions emerged upon review of the data.

Additionally, we are interested in and passionate about our own philosophical development related to teaching. Several measures were taken to ensure the trustworthiness of data interpretation, but bias may have influenced the data analysis process. An additional limitation was that member checks were not conducted to assure that the resulting categories were accurate to participants' perspectives (Patton, 2015). It is also noteworthy that the three members of the research team were white males and the majority of participants identified as white (87%) and male (60%). According to CACREP (2018), 71% of counselor educators identify as white and 37% identify as male. Thus, this sample was not fully representative of the counselor education population and further research in this area would benefit from more diverse researchers and participant samples.

Directions for Future Research

Given the professional-advancement purpose as the impetus for many to write or revise teaching philosophy statements, it is important to use a variety of data sources to assess the ways counselor educators integrate theory into their teaching. Interviews, class observations, syllabi, or

analysis of student work may provide a more in-depth picture of counselor educators' integration of theory and teaching. Additionally, since most participants' teaching philosophy statements were more focused on presenting their current instructional strategies, it remains unclear how counselor educators engage in the ongoing development of their teaching. Understanding the ways that counselor educators are reflecting on their teaching and the practices and supports they use to grow in their teaching could inform doctoral teaching preparation by painting a clearer picture of the gaps in current practices. Finally, since they might not have many conversations about learning theory beyond their doctoral programs, counselor educators could benefit from the development of support systems to help them integrate theory and teaching. Structured models (e.g., discussion groups providing feedback on teaching philosophy statements, observations colleagues' teaching, reflecting on their theory integration) could facilitate counselor educators' continual development of their teaching philosophies throughout their careers. Lastly, further investigation into how counselor educators' teaching philosophy statements are utilized in the hiring process might provide useful information for understanding the context of teaching philosophy statements in our field.

Conclusion

An educator's teaching philosophy can have direct impact on student learning (Magnuson, 2002; Magnuson et al., 2004; McDonald & Kahn, 2014; Robertson, 1999) and many counselor educators' report feeling underprepared in the development of their teaching philosophy (Waalkes et al., 2018). The results of this study indicate that counselor educators may lack theoretical depth when articulating their approach to teaching counselors-in-training. Focused attention on theoretical development specific to teaching can help counselor educators intentionally approach their teaching in a manner that could lead to better learning outcomes for counselors-in-training.

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