

5-1-2012

The Acquisition of Cultural Competence: A Phenomenological Inquiry Highlighting The Processes, Challenges and Triumphs of Counselor Education Students

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<http://dx.doi.org/10.34917/4332545>

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THE ACQUISITION OF CULTURAL COMPETENCE: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL
INQUIRY HIGHLIGHTING THE PROCESSES, CHALLENGES AND TRIUMPHS OF
COUNSELOR EDUCATION GRADUATE STUDENTS

By

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Master of Educational Psychology
University of Nevada, Las Vegas
2004

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy
in
Educational Psychology
Department of Educational Research, Cognition and Development
College of Education
Graduate College

University of Nevada, Las Vegas
May 2012

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THE GRADUATE COLLEGE

We recommend the dissertation prepared under our supervision by

Douglas L. Garner

entitled

**The Acquisition of Cultural Competence: A Phenomenological Inquiry
Highlighting the Processes, Challenges and Triumphs of Counselor
Education Graduate Students**

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ABSTRACT

The Acquisition of Cultural Competence: A Phenomenological Inquiry Highlighting the Processes, Challenges and Triumphs of Counselor Education Graduate Students

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Although research has effectively isolated and identified the key characteristics of a culturally competent counselor, there are few studies regarding the acquisition of these characteristics. To close the gap between theory and practice, studies are needed researching the emergence and, acquisition of these characteristics. This study explores how Masters-level Counselor Education students narrate the encounters, challenges, triumphs and epiphanies associated with their preliminary attempts to practice in a culturally competent manner. This phenomenological inquiry seeks to shed light students attitudes, beliefs and dispositions; defines the processes related to the acquisition of cognitive awareness and learning, skills and abilities; and illuminates how students describe their individual progress toward the acquisition of the traits and characteristics of a culturally competent counselor. Data was subjected to content analysis. The Cultural Competency Domains Model set the framework for analysis. The findings inform development of pedagogy.

The analysis revealed the challenges, discomfort, angst and discoveries associated with self-understanding and self-confrontation regarding students cross cultural abilities and skills during their earliest exposure to issues of race, ethnicity, culture, religion, age, gender and sexual orientation. Six core themes emerged: (1) Attitudes, beliefs and dispositions. (2) Cognitive awareness and learning. (3) Skills and abilities. (4) Cultural competence. (5) Opinions about school. (6) Self-assessment. Recommendations for educators are offered.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

There are many people to thank. Many names may not appear on this page. Nevertheless, please know that I thank you for touching my life.

I reverently thank my ancestors and elders Charlie Robinson, Sarah Robinson, Geeogia Robinson, Lee Sanders, Miss Lucy Robinson, Anthony Strange, Carter A. Strange, Jack Rice, Flossie Strange, James R. Bolds, William and Mariah Rogers, Mary Bolds, Fred and Dorothy Allen, Dianne Yarbrough, Jackie Taylor, for their nurture, love, hopes, dreams and possibilities.

To my dearest siblings TuWanda Locke, Olabisi Carr, Jackie Lloyd, and Titilayo Bonner you have been there since the beginning. My greatest achievement is being your big brother. Thank you for your constant guidance, teachings, support, love and patience.

To my cherished parents, Ardoway and Shirley Garner. You allowed me to believe that I could do, and be anything in the universe. Thank you for your guidance, patience, trust and love. You are forever my hero and sheroe.

To my dearest children Christopher, Emon and new baby grandson Mikan Tiher I love you, thank you for your love, support, patience and understanding. I know it's hard raising parents. My dear Emon, you will now know the blessings of parenthood.

To my nieces and nephews, Ndambi, Maisha, Amir, Hasani, Heaven, Shay, Kamau, Natice, Ifayemi, Knoelle, and Tyre. Each of you are capable of reaching the cosmos.

To Charlotte and Calvin thank you for your ongoing guidance and friendship. Pearl and Lil, you are the best, I love and appreciate you.

Thank you Mrs. Trinidad (Angeles Mesa Elementary School) for making me feel capable. A shout out to my Crenshaw High School "shaw dogs" Willie West, Reggie,

Mims, Robert Smith, Karen Celestine-Foucher, Stanley Carr, Walter Griffin, Arvitis Muhammed, Andrea Sutton, the Johnson brothers, Patrice Rushion, Ed Waters and Marcus Johnson. A shout to the folks at the Ron Karenga Cultural Center, and thank you to the original Black Panther Party for the awakening to social justice issues in my community. What a great foundation and learning environment we were provided.

To my East Bay kinfolk Majors and Lucella Harrison, Brian, Donald, Denise, Wendall, Ventrice, and the entire Harrison clan thank you for allowing me to be a part of your family. To Barbara Richardson, Joan, Jackie and the entire Richardson clan thank you for welcoming me. To Marion Nickson, Uncle James, Marie, Ray, Ranetta and the entire Nickson clan thank you for your support, guidance, understanding and patience.

My time at Cal-State University Hayward, now known as Cal-State East Bay allowed me to flower as an athlete and more importantly a human being. To Coach, Jim Santos, Don Chu, Marcel Hetu, and Malachi Andrews thank you for discovering my talent, for challenging me, for teaching me how to challenge myself in a tranquil manner, but perform and respond dynamically. To my teammates Edward Ray Clark, Dave Haber, Marvin Wamble, Greg Flenory, John Haynes and others, thank you for going to battle with me. We were a force to be dealt with. To my national, international teammates and competitors, Willie Banks, Larry Myricks, Evelyn Ashford, Al Joyner, and others thank you for showing me the ropes.

My move to Las Vegas transitioned me to adulthood Cal-State alums, Kenny and Kermit Bayless. Thurbin Warrick, Sam Germany, and Coach Al Mc Daniels thank you for welcoming to the community.

My thanks to Theron and Naomi Goynes, Angelo Collis, Linda Young, Yolanda

Arrington for taking me under your wing during my time at Clark High School.

To my Jeffrey Behavior Center crew, thank you for your continued support, I appreciate you very much. You are the best.

Special thanks to brother Dave Ross, Shelley K. Smith, Joni Wakley, Christina Paa, Connie Dabney, Rita Knox, and Fatima Parker thank you for your inspiration, friendship, love and support.

To my friends and colleagues, Marie Wakefield and Tiffany Tyler thank you very much for your ongoing friendship and support. What a journey we have endured together.

To Steven Henderson, thank you for your interest, patience, hard work and dedication to this research project.

To my venerated committee, thank you for your patience and guidance throughout this most rewarding process.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Statement of Problem and Overview of Dissertation

In order to educate and prepare counselor educators to service an increasingly diverse client base, the curriculum for (CACREP) Accredited Masters Level Counselor Education Programs has undergone radical change, with the cultural competence of new graduates a key success factor of that change. The curriculum first exposes new graduate students to theory and practice that is foundational or “generic” to the counselor education profession. Issues of cultural diversity are often integrated into the fabric of foundational courses, but more typically, advanced courses are offered on multiculturalism and cultural competence. Definitions, models, and theories of cultural competence have significantly expanded over the last twenty years. Research, however, on the challenges and problems faced by graduate students in the early development and practice of cultural competence has lagged behind the production of theory.

This dissertation project seeks to close the gap between theory and practice through a year-long qualitative study that captures the way Counselor Education graduate students narrate the emergence and acquisition of cultural competence. From their narratives information was gleaned regarding the attitudes, skill sets, instruction, and counseling practices that predict successful acquisition of cultural competence.

The study engaged three first-year graduate students. Each participant was interviewed a total of three times: at the beginning of spring semester 2011, at the middle of spring 2011, and toward the end spring semester 2011.

Findings were interpreted through the lens of the Cultural Competency Domains

Model (CCDM). This tool was used to interpret student dispositions, cognitive awareness, skills and abilities. The CCDM was developed by this researcher in association with Wakefield, Pehrsson, and Tyler following joint participation as instructors in a Cultural Education Multicultural Social Justice and Advocacy class (Spring, 2008). During this course master's level students were frequently observed struggling with their initial attempts to conceptualize the worldview of their clients. For instance, a common question the students would ask is, "Why do I have to learn the history of oppressed people to be a counselor?" This oft posed question served to motivate this researcher in this investigation.

Significance of Research

This dissertation was a phenomenological study of the way Masters-level Counselor Education graduate students narrate the challenges, triumphs, and epiphanies faced during their preliminary attempts to practice delivery of culturally competent service with diverse clients. Through evaluation of the data gathered, in the context of the student's first-year experience, this research isolated the processes related to the effective acquisition of cultural, historical knowledge and cognitive awareness necessary to effectively service diverse clients in a culturally sensitive manner. For example, the discovery of cultural, historical knowledge, students described how they achieved an understanding and awareness of the historical events that contributed to poverty in Native American communities. Students expressed an increased awareness of how these events affect the worldview and daily life interactions of these individuals. Students also revealed the challenges associated with discovering one's own biased attitudes and beliefs, along with a description of their process of self-reflection upon discovery of their own cultural,

historical background and self-efficacy. The research also assessed how students developed complex interpersonal skills needed to efficiently practice and engage clients in a culturally competent fashion.

Utilizing and analyzing participants' narratives, this investigation provides insight toward the development of progressive pedagogy that can enhance, for example, low-level and high-level interpersonal skills development, as well as cognitive skill development and overall multicultural curriculum development.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Generic and Cultural Foundations of Counselor Education

This chapter consists of two parts. Part one reviews the generic theory and practices students learn in the foundational stages of becoming a counselor: personality theory, good interviewing techniques, learning how to run and process small group therapy sessions, and case management. Questions, theories, and concerns related to specific multicultural subgroups such as working with gays/lesbians, the disabled, and a broad range of diverse cultural groups tend to be the focus of counselor education after the foundational or generic elements have been covered. Part two covers cultural competence, the Cultural Competency Domains Model, and the evolution of the current study.

Generic Practices

To a certain extent, the foundational and generic aspects of counselor education frame and constitute the background for the current dissertation, with cultural and multicultural competence comprising this dissertation's foreground. If knowing the elements and stages of a good clinical interview is considered generic knowledge, then knowing how to change or modify the dynamics of an interview in accordance with a client's diverse cultural background or ethnicity defines, in part, culturally competent interviewing skills. Stated simply, the modern counselor must attain general-counselor competence first before becoming capable of serving diverse clients.

Cultural competence in counselor education results from the fusion of generic-best practices with cultural sensitivity, awareness, and response. For use in this study, generic-best practices will be defined in terms of: (a) the basic ability to develop personal

relationships (interpersonal skills); (b) client conceptualization (e.g., conceptualization of the client in psychological versus physical terms); and (c) self-appraisal of one's ability to perform competently in the role of counselor (cognitive skills).

Table 1, which follows, summarizes the characteristics and attributes of Generic-Best Counseling Practices.

Table 1

Generic-Best Counseling Practices

Dispositions, attitudes and beliefs	<p>Exhibits one way of thinking</p> <p>Has little or no knowledge of diverse cultures and may deny the importance of cultural variables in counseling</p> <p>Lacks experiences in the exploration and discussion of cultural differences</p>
Knowledge and awareness	<p>Generic awareness of counseling theory and practice</p> <p>Comes to training only having knowledge of their own culture "tunnel vision"</p> <p>Lacks understanding of cultural stereotypes and bias, holds preconceived notions about others who are culturally different</p> <p>Unaware of ethical practices established to ensure cultural competency</p>
Skills and abilities	<p>Basic generic skills and abilities</p> <p>Demonstrates inadequate experience working with diverse populations</p> <p>Ineffective use of counseling practices involving diverse populations</p> <p>Lacks knowledge basic strategies for evaluating counseling outcomes in counseling</p>

Baker and Daniels (1989) have demonstrated effective models and strategies for teaching basic interpersonal skills. Current literature has also focused attention to models that stress cognitive skill development in students (Ivey, 2000). Research also indicates that counselor trainees showed significant increases in cognitive functioning as well. In each case the researchers stressed the importance of further study on the effects in naturalistic settings and complex skill development needed to engage diverse clients in real world settings.

Multiculturalism and Changes in the Counselor Education Curriculum

Until the early advent of culturally competent counseling, the curriculum of most counselor education programs was primarily generic and foundational. However, changes in America's demographics, combined with the demands of various social groups to be better served by counselors, forced the field to infuse cultural competence to the profile of a modern counselor.

For example, school personnel face growing pressure to better accommodate the counseling needs of approximately 20% of a typical school population who qualify for mental health services. Because of the momentous and influential changes in America's demographics, students in need of intervention and consultation are culturally diverse. Between 1990 and 2000, the number of immigrants in the USA increased by 50% (U. S. Immigration and Naturalization Service, 2000). While changes in the racial/ethnic demographics of the country is occurring, it is important to note that there are other demographic changes as well. Groups that have been marginalized or disenfranchised along other dimensions are making their voices heard and represent areas as diverse as sexual orientation, disability, and socioeconomic status. With these changes in mind, it is

imperative that delivery of psychological services to diverse individuals be culturally responsive.

Today's counselor must not only acquire generic competence but multicultural competence as well. The next section is a summary of the discourse on culturally competent counselors and will include the early theory and growth of definitions of cultural competence. Measurement of cultural competence, contribution of research, and scale development, introduction of the Cultural Competency Domains Model that will guide the current research and a summary are offered as well.

Early Theory and Growth of Definitions Associated with Cultural Competence

Culture can be associated with a racial or ethnic group as well as with gender, religion, economic status, nationality, physical capacity, or disability, and affectional or sexual orientation/identification. Pederson (2002) describes culture as including demographic variables such as age, gender, and place of residence; status variables such as social, educational, and economic background; formal and informal affiliations; and the ethnographic variables of nationality, ethnicity, language, and religion.

Multiculturalism represents a generic term indicating a person's relationship between and within two or more diverse groups. Cross-cultural, transcultural, and intercultural are drawn from similar meanings. The multicultural perspective in counselor education takes into consideration the specific values, beliefs, and actions conditioned by a client's ethnicity, gender, age, religion, ability, socioeconomic status, political views, sexual orientation, geographic region, spirituality, and historical experience with the dominant culture (Wright, Coley, & Corey, 1989). Multiculturalism provides a conceptual framework that recognizes the complex diversity of a pluralistic society, while at the same

time identifying shared concerns that bring culturally different folk together to address their concerns.

Counseling has been traditionally based on Western assumptions; consequently, counselors who have been trained in Western generic best practices may not have considered the influence and impact of racial and cultural socialization, resulting in the client's worldview being ignored and the client's perception of unequal treatment.

Many clients have come to distrust helping professionals associated with established social service agencies because of a history of unequal or unfair treatment. Because of this, clients may be slow to form trusting relationships with counselors, and mental health professionals may have difficulty identifying with clients from other cultures if they ignore the history behind the mistrust. Sue and Sue (2003) maintain that a basic reason for the underutilization of services and early termination of services is due to the biased, unresponsive nature of the services themselves, as well as the biases of individual practitioners. For example, in a multicultural class that the researcher participated in as a class instructor, the majority culture expressed the attitude, explicitly or implicitly, that racial and ethnic minorities are unresponsive to psychological intervention because of their lack of motivation to change, which these majority-culture students labeled as resistance. This researcher would suggest that what they may call "resistance" might be a healthy protective response on the part of the client to the practitioner's cultural and theoretical unawareness, insensitivity, bias, and the inability to respond in a culturally sensitive fashion.

It is important for practitioners from all cultural groups to honestly examine their own assumptions, expectations, and attitudes concerning best practices (Sue & Sue, 2003). It is

vital for the student/practitioner to “know thy cultural self.” Roysircar (2004) emphasizes the importance of cultural self-awareness as being essential in effective and culturally relevant practice. When students/practitioners begin to learn and become more aware of their own culture, they are moving in the direction of becoming culturally responsive. Moreover, mental health professionals have personal and professional responsibilities to confront, become aware of, and take action in dealing with their personal epistemology (e.g., biases, stereotypes, values, and assumptions about human behavior). Further, they must become aware of culturally different clients, including the values, biases, and assumptions about human behavior. Finally, they must develop culturally appropriate help-giving practices, interventions, strategies, and structures that take into account the historical, cultural, and environmental experiences/influences of culturally diverse clients, and how they affect the therapeutic relationship (Sue & Sue, 2003).

ACA and APA Position Papers on CC

In defining Cultural Competence (CC) as an approach to service delivery, the Surgeon General’s Report (2001) states that it must be integrated into all aspects of mental health practices, rather than be viewed as a specific practice in itself. The literature also suggests that taking account of cultural differences is not an evidence-based practice itself, but should be a key component in determining whether any practice can be deemed to be evidence-based (Carpinello, Rosenberg, Stone, Schwager & Felton, 2002; Goldman et al., 2001). There appears to be limited research that establishes the effectiveness of interventions for diverse racial, ethnic, and cultural populations. The movement to promote recovery-orientated mental health services does highlight the importance of Cultural Competence by focusing, not just on program structure, but the processes involved

in delivering services.

Agencies at the national, state, and local level have responded to the need to perform outreach to racially, ethnically, and culturally diverse people by developing guidelines implementing culturally sensitive behavioral health services. Associations such as the American Counseling Association (1995), American Psychological Association (1982) and the International Association of Psychosocial Rehabilitation Services have provided detailed guidelines for their members to promote Culturally Competent practices. The U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) made CC a priority issue, defining CC as providers acquiring the “knowledge, skills, and attitudes” to effectively serve diverse people. A SAMHSA (2000) report stated that recovery and rehabilitation is more likely when providers are culturally competent with underserved and underrepresented people. Given these recommendations and mandates, agencies had no choice but to implement cultural competence training and education. This inquiry will also contribute to the literature by helping to improve cultural competence training and pedagogy to enhance cultural awareness, knowledge and skills of the provider, and promote recovery for individuals with mental health challenges. Therefore, developing valid, reliable evaluation designs, methods, and measures is a critical part of the overall development of effective cultural competence training programs.

Empirical Research on the Characteristics of Culturally Competent Counselors

Shortly after the publication of the APA and ACA guidelines which stated the characteristics of a culturally competent counselor, researchers began to try to confirm that these traits and qualities could be measured. This led to a series of new multicultural measures which are ultimately designed to confirm the traits mentioned in APA and ACA

guidelines. The majority of these were self-reported static measures based on three domains identified by the ACA (1992).

The American Psychological Association developed Guidelines on Multicultural Education Training Research, Practice and Organization Change for Psychologists (APA, 2003a), which addresses the knowledge and skills needed for the profession as a result of the sociological changes within the United States. These guidelines provide psychologist with a framework for delivering services to an increasingly diverse population, and they can be useful for helpers in various mental health professions. This framework includes for example:

- Psychologists are encouraged to recognize, as cultural beings they may hold attitudes and beliefs that can detrimentally influence their perspectives of interactions with individual who are ethnically and racially different from themselves.
- Psychologists are encouraged to recognize the importance of multicultural sensitivity/responsiveness to, knowledge of, and understanding about ethnically and racially different individuals.
- As educators, psychologists are encouraged to employ the constructs of multiculturalism and diversity in psychological education.
- Culturally sensitive psychological researchers are encouraged to recognize the importance of conducting culture-centered and ethical psychological research among persons from ethnic, linguistic, and racial minority backgrounds.
- Psychologists are encouraged to apply culturally appropriate skills in clinical and other applied psychological practices.

- Psychologists are encouraged to use organizational change processes to support culturally informed organizational (policy) development and practices.

Because the ACA is the dominant organization for counselor educators, I will discuss the ACA Position Papers in greater detail. These papers outline the traits and characteristics of a culturally competent counselor. For example, they state that a culturally skilled counselor:

- Takes responsibility in educating their clients to the processes of psychological intervention, such as goals, expectations, legal rights, and the counselor's orientation.
- A culturally skilled counselor has moved from being culturally unaware to being aware and sensitive to their own cultural heritage and valuing and respecting differences.
- Culturally skilled counselors possess knowledge and understanding about how oppression, racism, discrimination, and stereotyping affect them personally and in their work. This allows them to acknowledge their own racial attitudes, beliefs and feelings.
- Culturally skilled counselors possess specific knowledge about the particular group they are working with. They are aware of the life experiences, cultural heritage, and historical background of their culturally different clients.
- Culturally skilled counselors understand and have knowledge about sociopolitical influences that impinge upon the life of racial and ethnic minorities, such as immigration issues, poverty, racism, genderism and powerlessness.

- Culturally skilled counselors are able to engage in a variety of verbal and non-verbal helping responses. They are able to send and receive messages accurately and appropriately. They are not tied down to one method or approach to helping, but recognize that helping styles and approaches may be culture bound.
- Culturally skilled counselors are able to exercise institutional interventions skills on behalf of their clients; they may need to and will take responsibility for interacting in the language requested by the client, and if not feasible make appropriate referral.
- Culturally skilled counselors have training and expertise in the use of traditional assessment and testing instruments. They not only understand the technical aspects of the instruments, but are also aware of the cultural limitations.
- Culturally skilled counselors advocate for culturally appropriate services utilizes professional skills and leadership to affect change.
- Culturally skilled counselors reflect diversity in one's scholastic endeavors.

Cultural Competency Domains Model

The tension between static traits versus the acquisition process was experienced by the author firsthand in the context of teaching a course on multicultural competence. The course was co-taught with Professor Dale-Elizabeth Pehrsson, Marie Wakefield, and Tiffany Tyler. Time and again, students in class shared with us their struggles to develop cultural competence. At the completion of the course, the course instructors met to compare notes and eventually developed a model designed to highlight the process of CC acquisition, and the instructional team named this the Cultural Competency Domains

Model. This model will be used in the interpretation of interview data for the current study. The model can be explained in the following way. Generic-best practices are the foundation of the CCDM, and it can be defined in terms of: (a) disposition; (b) cognitive, understanding and awareness; (c) skills and abilities. Across these three domains, four progressive stages of competency are identified: (1) novice—little or no development or implementation; (2) apprentice—limited development or partial implementation; (3) proficient—fully functioning and operational level of development and implementation; and (4) distinguished—exemplary level of development and implementation. For example, within the disposition domain a novice counselor would exhibit traits or characteristics reflective of having little or no knowledge of diverse cultures and may deny the importance of cultural variables in counseling. In contrast, a distinguished counselor will display knowledge and understanding of barriers that prevent underserved populations from utilizing mental health services. Or, within the domain of cognitive understanding and awareness, an apprentice counselor will identify areas to grow in a capacity to provide competent services, whereas a proficient counselor recognizes the limits of their competencies and expertise and therefore seeks educational, consultative and training experiences to enrich their understanding and effectiveness. Within the domain of skills and abilities, a novice practitioner would be unaware of the ethical practices established to ensure culturally competent skills and abilities. Through the developmental process, a proficient practitioner has become familiar with relevant research findings regarding mental health disorders that affect various racial and ethnic groups, which reflects diversity of one's scholastic endeavors. This model was developed as an interpretive lens that provides a framework for students and supervisors to help identify, comprehend, analyze

and implement their emerging skills and abilities (see Table 2).

Table 2

Cultural Competency Domains Model

Attitudes, Beliefs and Dispositions

Novice Little or no Development or implementation	Have little or no knowledge of diverse cultures and may deny the importance of cultural variables in counseling.	May overemphasize the importance of difference.	Lacks experiences of exploration and discussion of cultural differences.	Demonstrates inadequate experience working with a diverse population.	Has no knowledge of available community.
Apprentice Limited development or partial implementation	Demonstrating and emerging awareness of his/her own cultural biases and assumptions (Pederson, 2001)	Actively engaging in continuous process of challenging personal attitudes and beliefs that do not support respecting and valuing of differences. (Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis, 1992)	Exploring the community for knowledge of the variety of culturally appropriate services	Limited experiences in cultural discussions, working with diverse populations, and available community services.	Limited Knowledge of the effect of oppression, racism, discrimination, and stereotyping.
Proficient Fully functioning and operational level of development and implementation	Demonstrates and awareness and sensitivity to one's cultural heritage having an ability to identify specific features of culture of origin and the effect of the relationship with culturally different clients.	Demonstrates a level of comfort with differences in race, culture, and beliefs.	Demonstrates a working knowledge of available services to meet the cultural needs of clients.	Understands how Eurocentric tradition in counseling may conflict with cultural values of other tradition. (Ivey et al., 2006)	Possess knowledge and understanding about how oppression, racism, discrimination, and stereotyping affect them personally in their work. (Largo, 2006a)

Table 2 (continued)

Cognitive Awareness and Learning

Novice Little or no Development or implementation	Comes to training only having knowledge of their own culture “Tunnel Vision”	Lacks understanding of cultural stereotypes and bias and holds preconceived notions about others who are culturally different.	Lacks knowledge of assessment models.
Apprentice Limited development or partial implementation	Working to provide a climate and context for recognizing and understanding how diverse cultures share common ground and uniqueness.	Identifying areas to grow in a capacity to provide competent services.	Limited awareness of assessment models.
Proficient Fully functioning and operational level of development and implementation	Demonstrates knowledge about personal racial and cultural heritage and how it personally and professionally affects definitions of normality-abnormality and the process of counseling (Largo, 2006b)	Recognizes the limits of their competencies and expertise and therefore seeks educational, consultative, and training experiences to enrich understanding and effectiveness.	Limited skill in the use of assessment models.
Distinguished Exemplary level of development and implementation	Demonstrates a clear and explicit knowledge and understanding of the genetic characteristics and therapy (culture bound, class bound, and monolingual) and how they may clash with cultural values of various minority groups.	Utilizes expertise in identifying and administering appropriate culturally relevant assessments.	

Table 2 (continued)

Skills and Abilities

Novice Little or no Development or implementation	Exhibits one way of thinking.	Often places imposition of values onto others.	Unaware of the ethical practices established to ensure cultural competency.	Accepts unreasonable assumptions without proof or ignores the proof that might disconfirm one's assumptions.	
Apprentice Limited development or partial implementation	Recognizing a need for cultural competence and its effect on service.	Developing an understanding of how culture influences interventions with client (Davis, 1992)	Exploring specific knowledge and information about a particular group of individual.	Actively participates in reading and activities designed to develop cultural awareness and works toward eliminating racism and prejudice. (Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis, 1992)	Possesses a general awareness of the ethical standards for cultural competency.
Proficient Fully functioning and operational level of development and implementation	Understands how race, culture, ethnicity, gender, or disability may affect personality formation, vocational choices, manifestation of psychological disorders, help-seeking behavior and the appropriateness of counseling approaches.	Familiar with relevant research findings regarding mental health disorders that affect various racial and ethnic groups.	Demonstrates skill and knowledge in the ethical practices of cultural competency.	Knowledgeable and demonstrates efficiency in the practice of culturally competent ethical standards.	
Distinguished Exemplary level of development and implementation	Understands how race, culture, ethnicity, gender, or disability may affect personality formation, vocational choices, manifestation of psychological disorders, help-seeking behavior and the appropriateness or inappropriateness of counseling approaches.	Familiar with relevant research findings regarding mental health and mental health disorders that affect various racial and ethnic groups.	Reflects diversity in one's scholastic endeavors.	Consistently practices cultural sensitivity and the ethical practices of cultural competency at an exemplary level.	

Table 2 (continued)

Affective Behaviors

Novice Little or no Development or implementation	Becomes culturally encapsulated (Pederson, 2002)	Defines reality according to a universal, monocultural perspective.	Insensitive to cultural variations.	Fails to evaluate others' viewpoints.
Apprentice Limited development or partial implementation	Assisted by a supervisor in learning to engage in a variety of verbal and non-verbal helping responses.	Able to send and receive both verbal and non-verbal messages accurately and appropriately.	Working to gain a proficient level of comfort with the differences of race, ethnicity, culture, and beliefs.	
Proficient Fully functioning and operational level of development and implementation	Able to implement more than one method or approach to helping but recognizes that helping styles and approaches may be culture bound.	Refers to good sources when linguistic skills are insufficient.		
Distinguished Exemplary level of development and implementation	Demonstrates knowledge of the potential bias in the assessment instrument, use of procedures, and interprets findings keeping in mind the cultural and linguistic characteristics of clients.	Serves as an advocate for culturally appropriate services and utilizes professional skills and leadership to affect change.	Educates clients of service alternatives available and their personal and legal rights for effective cultural intervention.	

Evolution of the Current Study

Having co-developed the model, this researcher seeks to determine the value of the model in helping to interpret how students narrate the acquisition of CC. As described in detail in the methodology section, a year-long study was conducted that focused on the development and acquisition of cultural competence. The emphasis on acquisition and development provided the rationale to employ a qualitative methodology wherein participants narrated phenomenologically the encounters, challenges and triumphs associated with initial attempts to practice cultural competence.

Phenomenology as a discipline is distinct from, but related to, other key disciplines in philosophy, such as ontology, epistemology, logic and ethics. Phenomenology has been practiced in various forms for centuries, and became more widely recognized in the early 20th century in the works of Edmund Husserl, (1931) Martin Heidegger, (1962); Maurice Merleau-Ponty, (1962) and others.

Transcendental Phenomenology, Moustakas (1994), refers to the description of one or more individuals' consciousness and experience of a phenomenon. For example, the researcher may view oneself as a teacher, the act of teaching, the experience of being a minority group member, or the essence of being a champion athlete. As opposed to the perspective of van Manen (1990) which focuses on researcher developed themes and interpretations. The purpose of transcendental phenomenological research is to obtain a view into the research informants' worldview and to understand their personal meanings (i.e., what something means to them), their personal epistemology constructed from their life experiences, which further highlights the need to take into account the personal epistemologies of the participants during the development of codes, categories, themes and

trends. Hence, the purpose of utilizing a phenomenological inquiry was to isolate key concepts, identify learning and pedagogical processes in the phenomena of acquisition and praxis of CC.

Summary

In this chapter I've tried to illustrate these five points:

1. The front-end of any curriculum regarding counselor education focuses on generic or foundational theories skills and practices.
2. Two, America has undergone momentous demographic change and as a result, issues of diversity and multiculturalism are now a part of the counselor education curriculum.
3. Key professional associations such as the ACA and APA have produced position papers meant to guide the development of multicultural practices and curriculum.
4. Researchers have been able to empirically isolate the characteristics that make a person culturally competent; however, this research has not been process orientated. The traits and characteristics of a culturally competent counselor versus the difference between processes and challenges a person endures during the emerging development of CC were reviewed.
5. Finally, this chapter ended with a brief discussion of the process-orientated study dissertation conducted for the purpose of gaining a better understanding of what first-year graduate students go through in the acquisition and praxis of Cultural Competence.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The methods chapter contains sections describing, role of the researcher, researcher narrative and assumptions, sampling and participants, interview protocol and procedures.

Role of the Researcher

The researcher possesses a unique and critical role in the process of qualitative investigation. Since the inquiry of a particular phenomenon takes place in the natural setting of human subjects, a human instrument is required to provide context for the data that are recovered. No other investigative instrument has the characteristics needed to cope with the multifaceted construction of knowing and feeling in humanistic inquiry (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Both Lincoln and Guba (1985) identify phenomenological researchers as social scientists who deal with social data. Further, they argued for the analysis of human experience and when the data was collected through the narrative only then did it truly capture the quality of human. The researcher, then serves as the primary instrument of inquiry and as such must take the responsibility and own all prior assumptions, experiences, beliefs and biases (Moustakas, 1994). Although it is the collaborative process of meaning making between and among the researcher and the participants that is valued Moustakas (1994), it is understood that the biases, values, and judgment of the researcher do become part of the research report Creswell (2003).

The process of self-reflection is a crucial element to the research in order to be certain that the meanings conveyed are those of the participants, and not just those of the researcher (Moustakas, 1994). Husserl defined this place as the “Epoche” and he called it “the freedom from suppositions” (Moustakas, 1994, p. 85). In the Epoche, a Greek word meaning to stay away from or abstain, the researcher seeks to eliminate consciousness,

previous knowledge, and experiences based in scientific fact that may provide a knowing of things in advance (Moustakas, 1994). Moustakas sees the “Epoche”, or bracketing, as “a preparation for deriving new knowledge, a process of setting aside predilections, prejudices, predispositions, and allowing things, events, and people to enter anew into consciousness, and to look and to see them again, as if for the first time” (p. 85). Creswell (1998) offers that:

Phenomenological analysis requires the researcher to state his or her own assumptions regarding the phenomenon under investigation and then bracket or suspend these preconceptions in order to fuller understand the experience of the subject and not impose an a priori hypothesis on the experience (p. 277).

Researcher’s Personal Narrative and Assumptions

The framework of a phenomenological study requires the researcher to be the primary instrument of investigation and therefore the researcher has the responsibility to make assumptions, experiences, and biases known, a disclosure of a personal narrative and assumptions regarding the phenomenon of inquiry are an obligation of the researcher (Moustakas, 1994).

As an educator who has taught for thirty-two years working at the elementary level, middle school, high school, juvenile correctional facility and currently as teacher and professional school counselor in a behavioral center, I’ve observed firsthand the changing demographics in the public education system. As the nation's ethnic and cultural diversity increases, schools are challenged to develop new ways to create productive, multicultural environments to accommodate diverse student backgrounds and native languages. Addressing the rise in multicultural classrooms requires commitment by school officials to

second-language learners. Issues of racism and ethnicity must also be addressed because it is important that teachers and counselors develop attitudes and beliefs, acquire the knowledge and awareness, skills and abilities necessary to serve an increasingly diverse client base.

The role of counselor education supervision is significant in developing a foundational, generic base of a competent counselor. Counselor training literature has identified a variety of approaches in promoting clinical competence in students. One of the most prominent approaches in this area has included curriculum models for the development of interpersonal skills (i.e., behaviorally observable interviewing skills) (Pederson & Ivey, 1993; Nwachukwu & Ivey, 1991). Current literature has also focused attention to models that stress cognitive skill development in students (Ivey, 2000).

Although these practices are foundational to best counseling practices they may not have considered the influence and impact of racial and cultural socialization, resulting in the clients worldview being invalidated resulting in culturally insensitive treatment. Consequently, clients may be slow to develop trusting relationships with counselors and other mental health professionals. Organizations and associations such as the American Counseling Association and the American Psychological Association published guidelines which identified the characteristics of a culturally competent counselor. Researchers have confirmed that these traits and qualities can be measured. This led to a series of new multicultural measures which are ultimately designed to confirm the traits mentioned in ACA and APA guidelines. These position papers provided detailed guidelines to promote Culturally Competent practices. For example, a culturally skilled counselor has moved from being culturally unaware to becoming aware and sensitive to their own cultural

heritage, and to value and respect differences. Culturally skilled counselors possess knowledge and understanding how oppression, racism, discrimination, and stereotyping affect them personally in their work with diverse populations.

While serving as an adjunct instructor teaching social justice and multicultural classes in counseling, that involved analyzing weekly student reflections my colleagues and I noted that approximately fifty percent of our students struggled with information regarding historical contexts and oppression. Students wrote about their frustrations and openly criticized the need and value for history claiming it did not relate to developing culturally responsive counseling relationships. For example, students did not understand why historical events contributed to poverty in Native American communities and how the current worldview and daily lives of individuals are impacted by their historical journey. For example, one person noted: “I grew up in poverty. How can I be privileged?” These types of encounters aroused the curiosity of the instructors and led us to analyze student patterns that in turn led to the development of the Cultural Competency Domains Model (Wakefield, Garner, Pehrsson & Tyler, 2010). This model frames the development of students in terms of their dispositions, attitudes, cognitive awareness, skills and abilities. These domains are mapped across developmental markers; novice, apprentice, proficient and distinguished.

Progressing through the counselor education program I became more culturally aware of my personhood, gained greater awareness of the expanding definition and identification of diversity and culture, and confronted my own stereotypes and biases concerning those different from myself. For example, the question of having to develop a therapeutic relationship with a sex offender had been a challenging population for me. Through

education, consultation and listening to the personal narratives of offenders and gaining a better awareness and understanding of the experiences, worldview and challenges faced by these individuals my stereotypes and biases have been clarified. Given these experiences as a student it is not difficult for me to recognize similar challenges, rewards and awakenings confronting counselor education students. Consequently, I have certain assumptions regarding what I anticipated the participants in my study would disclose about their experiences:

- New students would be challenged as they gain a greater understanding of one's own cultural/ethnic background.
- Students would be challenged as they begin to confront their one bias's and stereotypes.
- Students would be challenged as they gained greater historical, cultural knowledge and background of individuals different than themselves.
- Students would be challenged as they began to move from theory to praxis.

My ability to identify and have an understanding of the challenges, difficulties and rewards pertaining to the process of becoming a culturally competent person put me at an advantage in developing a research relationship with the participants in this phenomenological inquiry. Therefore, in keeping with the tenants of phenomenological inquiry, I have made great effort to bracket my assumptions so they did not interfere with my ability to interpret and comprehend the experiences narrated by my participants.

Sampling and Participants

The three female participants for this investigation were volunteers solicited by recruitment flyers throughout the counselor education department.

Participants included:

- 23 year old female currently employed by City of Las Vegas Parks and Recreation who identifies herself as Bi-racial, Catholic, visually impaired, brief amount of cultural competence training, and is seeking her Master's Degree in School Counseling
- 37 year old female currently not employed, identifies herself as white (German, Bohemian and Welsh). She identifies her religious affiliation as Lutheran. She does have previous cultural competence experience in college. This participant is seeking a Master's Degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling.
- 31 year old female currently not employed identifies herself as White, no religious affiliations, no previous cultural competence training, and is seeking a Master's Degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling.

Instrumentation

Each participant was interviewed three times and the interview format was generally the same across all three interviews: beginning of spring semester 2011; (2) mid-point of the spring semester 2011; (3) end of spring semester 2011. After the first interview each participant was asked to provide a written reflection before the start of the two remaining interviews. Each interview was audiotaped, the 1st interview took 20 -25 minutes, the Second 25-30 minutes, and the third interview lasted approximately 20 - 25 minutes.

Procedures

The research project was announced in classroom lectures, practicum, and internship classes and a call was put forth for volunteers. A list of names was gathered and the

respondents were invited by the researcher to participate in an individual interview at a mutually-agreed upon time. During this initial meeting I provided a participant demographics information form (see APPENDIX A). Participants were given a question guide in advance of the interview (i.e., age, sex, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, etc.), and an informed consent form (see APPENDIX C). A second interview was scheduled with the prospective participant. At that point, the informed consent form was returned by the prospective participant and thoroughly explicated by the researcher and signed by the participant.

Each participant was interviewed three times. In order to create an environment where it was comfortable for interviewees to disclose I began the initial interview with a social discussion. This included asking students about studies and academic interests concerning counselor education. The introductory stage was followed by a brief discussion about this specific research project that lead directly into the interview proper. The interview began with a series of open-ended questions, followed by probing questions; with the interview ending after 25-30 minutes. As the interviewer, I positioned the tenor and sequential order of the questions to further investigate issues raised, but essentially, the questions began in a similar fashion. For example, (1) please tell me about yourself; (2) please tell me about your academic interests; (3) please tell me about your professional interests. (4) Please discuss your interpretation of cultural competence. Students were engaged in a conversational-style of questioning rather than the interviewer rigidly asking each question. The open-ended interview questions were crafted utilizing the factor structure domains guided by extant instruments used in survey research of CC and ACA/APA guidelines and the interpretive lens of CCDM will be structured to formulate

more probing follow-up questions

The second interview conducted with each participant focused on questions and statements pertaining to client conceptualization, such as: (1) Please discuss your current experience engaging diverse individuals. (2) Please discuss your biases or stereotypes you have of individuals different from yourself; (3) How do you view your African-American clients? (4) Please discuss any challenges you may be experiencing as you engage diverse clients? This style was adapted early in the interview process to encourage participants to articulate their initial disposition and attitudes, knowledge and awareness, skills and abilities during the acquisition and praxis of cultural competence. The final interview focused on the participant's self-assessment of their movement or lack of movement during their early acquisition of cultural competence utilizing the CCDM as an interpretive lens. These questions included questions such as: (1) Please take a look at the CCDM and discuss where you think you may be on this continuum. (2) Where do you think you fall on the CCDM as it related to your skill and abilities? (3) Where do you think you fall on the CCDM as it relates to your cognitive awareness and learning thus far? The purpose of the questions was to elicit the participant's descriptions of the experience rather than simple recollections of events (Polkinghorne, 1989).

Transcription: Each interview was transcribed immediately to a paper-based format from audiotape following the interview, highlighting key points with fluorescent markers and later to color coding for analysis and consolidation.

Room #335 in the Carlson Education Building on the campus of UNLV was utilized to gather data during the grounding stage of the study.

CHAPTER 4

DISCUSSION OF CODING SCHEMES AND DATA ANALYSIS

This chapter outlines the codes and coding procedures followed as outlined by Moustakas (1994). The final section in this chapter describes procedures used to analyze the interview data. The Moustakas (1994) model was selected as the reference because of its systemic design based on six primary steps they follow:

1. Identify a question of interest, (i.e., how do counselor education students narrate their challenges, problems, successes, and epiphanies as they initially attempt to practice cultural competence?), a phenomena, the essence of which I wanted to understand;
2. Identify my biases and doing as much as I could as the researcher to put them aside and concentrate on the experience of the participant;
3. Collect narratives and interview transcriptions about the phenomenon (from respondents who are experiencing it) by asking open-ended questions followed by probing queries to allow richer responses;
4. Use my now freshened after bracketing perspective, (the term bracketing referring to the researcher's effort to identify his or her biases as they relate to the phenomenon being examined), I will address similar questions posed to the participants and integrate them into my analysis intuition to identify the processes of the phenomenon;
5. Lay out those processes in writing with exemplary quotes from the transcribed data; and

6. Repeat steps four and five until there is no more to learn about the experience of meeting the challenges associated with praxis.

The findings were taken back to the participants/subjects for review to determine if the researcher had omitted anything. This step served as participant validation and is the member check.

Coding Schemes

The coding process comprised two primary stages. During the first stage (Initial Coding) of interviews a set of coding strategies was utilized revealed a set of categories and themes. The second stage (In-Depth Categorization), revisiting the raw transcript data and investigated each separately and individually several times to establish a comprehensive dataset coding for each theme, pattern, and category.

After further review of the interview transcriptions and reflections, significant statements and quotes were coded into domains these included:

- Dispositions, Attitudes and Beliefs
- Knowledge Awareness and Learning
- Skills and Abilities
- Cultural Competence
- Opinions about School
- Self-Assessment

Patterns and themes within the five coded items were dissected and synthesized into subcategories. The data was also viewed through the interpretive lens of the CCDM. The domains are by no means mutually exclusive and indeed overlap. Because of this overlap subcategories were created. These subcategories uncovered much richness and

meaning. The data is being stored and maintained for a period of three years in a secure location in the Department of Educational Research, Cognition, and Development at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. After three years, the data will be destroyed in a secure fashion.

Consequently the analytical procedures incorporated a set of processes that map and cover six primary steps similar to Colaizzi (1978) and modified by Moustakas (1994). The data was also be mapped across the CCDM. Both approaches provided structure. The Moustakas approach added the component of bracketing, or *Epoche*, whereby the researcher orientates personal experiences:

1. The researcher reviews the collected data and becomes familiar with it; this process attempts to gain an understanding of participants' inherent feeling.
2. The researcher returns to the data to focus on those aspects that are seen as most important to the phenomena being studied; significant statements are extracted from this data.
3. The researcher takes each significant statement and formulates meaning in the context of the subjects own terms.
4. The meanings from a number of interviews are grouped or organized in a cluster of themes; continuous comparison steps will reveal common patterns or trends in data; an exhaustive description, or analytical description, is compiled of the participants feelings and ideas on each theme is constructed.
5. The researcher identifies the fundamental structure for each exhaustive description; the transcripts are taken back to the participants to validate (member check) to see if the researcher has omitted anything (see Table 2).

The members check interview accomplished a number of objectives. The process provided a validity check wherein the narrative was taken back to the participants and checked for omissions, misrepresentations, or misinterpreted responses. The check also provided subjects feedback and insight into the process associated with this style of educational research. Consequently, participants could review that points and issues raised were recognized and valuable to the study. Finally, the check provided an opportunity for the participants to add to and discuss their responses.

These significant statements and themes were then assessed and used to write a description of the context or setting that influenced how the participants experienced the phenomenon, this is called imaginative variations. This process captured the structural process of the experience and trends noted within the inquiry.

Table 3

Phenomenological Analysis Mapped Against the Coding and Analysis

Moustakas: Six Steps Of Phenomenological Analysis	Coding Steps, Grouping and Analysis
1. Determined a phenomenon of interest. Review the collected data and become familiar with it. Through the process the researcher gained a feeling for the participant's inherent meanings.	Personal Log Coding (Interview) Inherent Meaning Coding (Interview)
2. Returned to the data to focus on those aspects seen as most important to the phenomena being studied. From the data extract significant statements.	Identification of Important Statements Coding (Interview)
3. Take each significant statement to formulate meaning that leads to a textural description in the context of the participants experiences on respondents own terms.	Analytical Log Coding (Interview) Building codes from the research questions
4. The meanings from a number of interviews are grouped or organized in a cluster of themes. This step reveals common patterns or trends in the data.	Scheme Grouping (Interview) Theme Identification (Entire Dataset)
5. Crafted a detailed, analytical description is compiled of each participant's feelings and ideas on each theme. This is called an exhaustive description.	Analytical Log Grouping (Interview) Final Categorization (Entire Dataset)
6. Finally identified the fundamental structure for each exhaustive description. The findings are taken back to the subjects who check to see if the researcher has omitted anything. This is called the member check. The data is reported.	Key feature Grouping (Interview) Final Categorization (Entire Dataset)

Data Analysis

Qualitative research is concerned with understanding the processes of human behavior and is primarily concerned with the questions of “how” and “what.” Therefore, the interview questions were structured to gain insight into the experience or process of developing cultural competence. A Phenomenological method of interviewing was chosen to allow individuals the opportunity to make meaning of their experience by sharing their experience through language. Phenomenological research is a qualitative research method which focuses on understanding a concept or a phenomenon (Creswell, 1989). Phenomenological research is concerned with the meaning of the lived experience (Polkinghorne, 1989).

Transcendental Phenomenology, Moustakas (1994) refers to the description of one or more individuals’ consciousness and experience of a phenomenon, such as the early attempts to practice in a culturally competent fashion. By way of contrast the perspective of van Manen (1990) focuses on researcher developed themes and interpretations. The purpose of utilizing transcendental phenomenological research is to obtain a view into the research informants’ worldview and to understand their personal meanings of the phenomena (i.e., what something means to them. Phenomenology is “concerned with wholeness, with examining entities from many sides, angles, and perspectives until a unified vision of the essences of a phenomenon or experience is achieved” (Moustakas, 1994, p. 58).

The organization and analysis of data is initiated when I, the researcher reads the transcripts of the interview, and begins to study the contents through the methods and protocol outlined by Moustakas (1994). The protocol leads the researcher to a rich

description of the meanings and essences of the phenomenon being studied. In this case the early acquisition and attempt to practice in a culturally competent fashion.

Horizontalization

The Horizontalization process began when the researcher began reflecting upon his own experience as it applied to the acquisition of cultural competence. Horizontalization is the process of listing each statement, sentence or phrase in a verbatim transcript that describes separate thoughts pertaining to the phenomenon. Each statement or phrase takes on equal weight in terms of its value; therefore every statement was initially catalogued. The horizons, or meaning units or the experience that remain are the invariant constituents of the experience. Any repetitive or overlapping statements and vague or unclear expressions were eliminated leaving only the invariant constituents. Invariant constituents are statements that contain an element of the experience that is required for understanding the phenomenon. For example, Helen who discussed the process of developing a therapeutic relationship with a client stated “I’m working on building trust right now.”

The invariant horizons point to the unique qualities of an experience, those that stand out Moustakas (1994). For example, Jean discussed “what I think culture means to me” she spoke of redefining and expanding her awareness of culture by including micro-systems of groups such as the military. The invariant horizons or constituents were then clustered and identified into core themes of the experience regarding attitudes, beliefs and dispositions, cultural knowledge and awareness, and skills and abilities.

Textural Description

The remaining invariant constituents and themes were used to construct a textural

description of the experience of cultural competence acquisition for each participant. These descriptions chronicled each participant's experience, and depicted clear understandings of what occurred during the experience under discussion. For example participant Helen discussed her anxiety regarding diverse clients. She explained "that it's one thing to do counseling session with other counseling students but "it's a whole different thing to go into a population of children who don't have your same vocabulary, don't necessarily have the willingness to speak and then engage them." This phase of the reduction process produced a description of each participant's self-awareness, knowledge and awareness of individuals different than themselves, self-reflection and assessment. Moustakas (1994) describes the essence of textural description as follows:

Throughout there is an interweaving of person, conscious experience, and phenomenon. In this process of explicating the phenomenon, qualities are recognized and described; every perception is granted equal value, nonrepetitive constituents of the experience are linked thematically, and a full description is described (p. 96).

Structural Description

Structural description involves the use of the imaginative variations of the researcher; a structural contextual description for each participant was created. The textural description was used as the foundation; the description provided an accounting of the underlying essence of the experience. It attempts to account for "how" the feeling and thoughts of the process of early acquisition and practice of cultural competence are connected. Imaginative variation is defined by Moustakas (1994) as the seeking of possible meaning through "imaginings, varying the frames of reference, employing polarities and reversals,

and approaching the phenomena from divergent perspectives, difficult positions, roles, or functions” (p. 97).

Succinctly put Moustakas states:

The aim is to arrive at structural descriptions of an experience, the underlying and precipitating factors that account for what is being experienced; in other words the “how” that speaks to conditions that illuminate the “what” of experience. How did the experience of the phenomenon come to be what it is (p. 98)?

Textural Structural Synthesis

The textural structural description of the meanings and essence of the experience was constructed for each participant. This final step in the analysis process required an integration of the textural and structural descriptions that provided a synthesis of the meanings and essence of the experience. This synthesis incorporated the invariant constituents that emerged as core themes Moustakas (1994). Consequently, the task and challenge of this researcher was to blend the conscious experiences and perceptions of the participants with the underlying structural interpretation. For example, during our final interview I asked Jean if her notion of cultural competence has changed. She said a few weeks ago Dr. XXXXX talked about individual identity “it compared to an individualist society then a collectivist society; he talked about how a person will identify in the collectivist culture versus the individualist culture, and how they assign value to certain skill sets, and how it builds self-worth and self-concept. Jean said in regards to counseling “it puts the person first to figure out how far they actually identify with their ethnicity, and how they fit into their community. I asked Jean how has she taken that awareness and knowledge and incorporated it into her practice. She said it has caused her to account for

her “not perpetuating stereotypes, which I was always leery about doing because I don’t want to do that. So I thought I accounted for that better.”

Validity and Reliability

Validity is defined as evidence of authentic, believable findings of a phenomenon from research that results from strict adherence to methodological rules and standards. Validity and reliability in qualitative research is known by many names: truth, value, credibility and trustworthiness (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) to name a few. Creswell and Miller (2000) recommend eight primary strategies to check the authenticity or trustworthiness of findings. For example, member-checking, acquiring rich thick descriptions, clarifying researcher bias, use of peer debriefing, utilizing an external auditor. The following sections are specific examples of strategies used throughout this study.

Triangulation of Data

Three interviews with each participant were conducted to provide multiple perspectives on the research questions. Information from each of the interviews was infused into an ordered whole. This process began with the initial codes developed from the interviews and were further interpreted to create more condensed themes and categories emerging from participant information. This yielded themes and patterns within each individual participant’s responses and from responses across all participants.

At this point in the research I will provide an example of the coding scheme utilizing examples from participant Jean’s narratives:

Initially invariant horizons were developed. The following are core themes identified and coded from participant narratives.

1. Attitudes, Beliefs and Dispositions

2. Cognitive Awareness and Learning
3. Skills and Abilities
4. Cultural Competence
5. Opinions about school
6. Self- Assessment

Stage two was the development of textural descriptions. The following are examples of participant Jane's textural descriptions coded within the six identified codes or themes.

Attitudes, Beliefs and Dispositions:

First interview, I asked Jean why she thought race matters. She said she thinks "people like to put things "into categories and then we also like to know where we belong." Jean explained that "racial identity and ethnic identity goes into how we feel about ourselves and how we like people to address us."

Cognitive Awareness and Learning:

Second interview, Jean described "where I've gone since the last time we talked." Jean feels that she has "really improved." She said she has been able to "redefine what I think culture means to me," She says she has included micro-systems of groups and how those groups are cultures within themselves, such as military cultures. "I don't think really before that I thought about those as being cultures." She said after she really thought about it "they kinda are, which provided a little epiphany for me... I was excited." Jean said what really highlighted that point for her was her social justice and advocacy class. "Every week we look at a different group whether it's an ethnic group or one of the micro-systems.

Skills and Abilities:

Third interview, I asked Jean to share with me how she is implementing the skills she is learning in her theory classes. She said she is “getting to know the kids and where they’re coming from, prior to starting with my groups. I think that has really been helpful for me to figure out what their home life is like.”

4. Cultural Competence

First interview, I asked Jean how she defined cultural competence. Jean said she thought “cultural competence is just awareness and also experience. Just really getting to know where you are with your prejudice or biases; and also know where other people are, and trying to get out the stereotypes that float around so much.”

5. Opinions about school:

Frist interview, I asked Jean to describe her experience in the graduate program thus far. She replied “amazing, I’ve had a lot of fun here and I don’t know if that just because it’s the second week and the work load hasn’t hit yet; but I really like the cohort.”

6. Self- Assessment:

Students were asked to assess their competency in the core areas; attitudes, beliefs and dispositions; cognitive awareness and learning; skills and abilities.

Checks on Researcher Bias

After the analysis of interview information, I forwarded to each participant the summary of her interviews for review of interpretations. Regarding the meanings that they expressed and the emerging categories I identified. Participants were asked to comment on the accuracy of the summary. And any misunderstandings of their meaning that occurred was discussed and corrected. The initial and combined summaries of the

interviews were shared with each participant, acted as a check on my initial interpretations of what the participant meant (Kvale, 1996). According to Patton (1991), such a participant audit helps to ensure that the researcher is aware of the influence of my personal perspectives and perceptions of this study.

Table 3

Frequency Table: Number of Times Each Participant Mentioned a Core Theme.

Name of participant	Jean	Helen	Laura
Frequency of codes: Attitudes, beliefs and dispositions	Mentioned 6 times in 1 st interview. 1 time in 2 nd interview. 1 time in 3 rd interview.	Mentioned 6 times in 1 st interview. 8 times in 2 nd interview. 2 times in 3 rd interview.	Mentioned 1 time in 1 st interview. 1 time in 2 nd interview. 2 times in 3 rd .
Frequency of codes: Cognitive awareness and learning	Mentioned 13 times in 1 st interview. 3 times in 2 nd interview. 6 times in 3 rd interview.	Mentioned 5 times in 1 st interview. 6 times in 2 nd interview. 5 times in 3 rd interview.	Mentioned 8 times in 1 st interview. 19 times in 2 nd interview. 10 times in 3 rd .
Frequency of codes: Skills and abilities	Mentioned 4 times in 1 st interview. 3 times in 2 nd interview. 0 times in 3 rd interview.	Mentioned 3 times in 1 st interview. 3 times in 2 nd interview. 2 times in 3 rd interview.	Mentioned 1 time in 1 st interview. 5 times in 2 nd interview. 1 time in 3 rd .
Frequency of codes: Cultural competence	Mentioned 7 times in 1 st interview. 2 times in 2 nd interview. 4 times in 3 rd interview.	Mentioned 2 times in 1 st interview. 4 times in 2 nd interview. 1 times in 3 rd interview.	Mentioned 3 times in 1 st interview. 3 times in 2 nd interview.
Frequency of codes: Opinions about school	Mentioned 3 times in 1 st interview. 4 times in 2 nd interview. 3 times in 3 rd interview.	Mentioned 2 times in 1 st interview. 3 times in 2 nd interview. 1 time in 3 rd interview.	Mentioned 2 times in 1 st interview. 3 times in 2 nd interview.
Frequency of codes: Self-assessment	Mentioned 1 time in 1 st interview. 1 time in 2 nd interview. 7 times in 3 rd interview.	Mentioned 2 times in 1 st interview. 3 times in 2 nd interview. 1 time in 3 rd interview.	Mentioned 3 times in 1 st interview. 2 times in 2 nd interview.

CHAPTER 5

Results

Introduction

In this chapter an interpretive summary is presented. This includes the co-researchers narratives as viewed through the lens of the CCDM. The interpretive summary will include each participant Structural Contextual Descriptions to create context reference for the reader. Highlighted statements extracted from each participant narrative are included.

The final sections of this chapter include the textural structural synthesis for each participant a summary, limitations of the study, and implications for future research.

In order to answer questions regarding how participants came to be aware of concepts such as culture, bias, stereotypes, discrimination, privilege and oppression participants routinely started out with their personal histories and experiences in their families, neighborhoods, childhood and their adult relationships. Students did not come to the table with empty plates regarding issues of culture, race, discrimination, and oppression. Moreover, what often got neglected in the literature is the role that an individual's personal history and background play in the development of meaning that they attribute to their conceptions of culture, race privilege, and oppression (Arredondo et al., 1996). Consequently, such concepts are important to a counselors understanding and implementation of multicultural counseling (Sue et al., 1992; Ridley, Mendoza, & Kanitz, 1994).

A level of cultural competence was determined by mapping statements and quotes against the CCDM for the following coded areas:

- Attitudes, Beliefs and Dispositions: According to Sue and Sue, (2003) becoming a culturally competent counselor involves dealing with the practitioner's attitudes and beliefs about race, culture, ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation; the need to recognize her assumptions; the need to monitor personal biases; development of a positive view toward multiculturalism; and understand how one's values and biases may get in the way of effective helping.
- Cognitive Awareness and Learning: Cognitive awareness and learning according to Sue and Sue, (2003) is the second dimension of becoming a culturally skilled practitioner is knowledgeable and understanding of her own worldview, possesses specific knowledge of diverse groups with whom she works, understands the worldview of culturally diverse clients, and has a basic understanding of sociopolitical influences.
- Skills and Abilities: Sue and Sue, (2003) describe a culturally skilled counselor as possessing the ability to deal with skills interventions and strategies necessary in serving diverse clients.
- Cultural Competence: Cultural competence in counselor education results from a marriage of generic-best practices with cultural sensitivity, awareness and response. Cultural competence will be defined from a broad perspective to understand that each of us is simultaneously a member of many different cultures (Multiculturalism). Culture can be associated with a racial or ethnic group as well as with gender, religion, economic status, nationality, physical capacity or disability and affectional or sexual orientation/identification. Pederson (2002) describes culture as including demographic variables such as age, gender, and place

of residence, status variables such as social, educational, and economic backgrounds, formal and informal affiliations, and the ethnographic variables of nationality, ethnicity, language and religion.

- **Opinions about School:** Co-researchers statements and quotes regarding school (i.e., curriculum, instruction/supervision, mentorship or cohort). Opinions about school are noted, due to frequency and relevance to the participant's narrative it was coded as a theme. There is currently no identified level of competency on the CCDM. Therefore, a level of competency was not identified.
- **Self-Assessment:** Co-researchers statements and quotes assessing her ability to effectively acquire and practice the complex traits, characteristics and skills required to become a culturally competent counselor.

The levels of competence previously described in the CCDM (see Table 2) are:

- Novice
- Apprentice
- Proficient
- Distinguished

So that we maintain our obligation of confidentiality each participant narrative was provided an alias name.

Jean's Contextual Structural Descriptions

Jean's Background/Experience

Jean is a twenty-three year old Catholic female currently employed by the City of Las Vegas Parks & Recreations. She identifies herself as Bi-racial, and is visually impaired [wears glasses]. She has a "brief amount" of cultural competence training, and Jean is seeking her Master's Degree in School Counseling. I asked Jean if she was currently working, she said she had just quit her job at the beginning of the semester. "I worked for the "City of Las Vegas" running the summer camp for all age groups. She said the groups were "predominantly Caucasian" due to the location of the facilities.

First interview with Jean: Jean discussed her diversity training before entering into the graduate program. She said she had some training "with the city." She said it was called "the inclusion program," which included seminars about different "socio-economic status groups, and how to work with them."

During our first interview I asked Jean how she identifies herself ethnically or culturally. She said "I really didn't like doing that because I'm adopted. So, I don't actually know the specifics; so I personally shy away from that. I identify white, which I'm probably ethnically not, and that's just from my parents because they are white."

Jean is the "adopted" daughter of Caucasian parents. Jean has an older sister who she also identifies as "Bi-racial." Jean said she could never understand why "my friends always assumed that my dad was black." She said her mom taught in the same elementary school so all her friends in the school knew her mom really well. Her dad worked for the school district also but he "always worked weird hours for a while so her "friends never saw my dad." Jean said in "middle school my dad was there and my mom

wasn't." Jean said then her friends began to assume her "mother was black." Jean said she "never really understood that for a good many years. It never really occurred to me why they were thinking that. I think that is when I got into the "colorblind" thing when I was like I don't know why that [color] matters." I asked Jean why she thought race matters. She said she thinks "people like to put things "into categories and then we also like to know where we belong." Jean explained that "racial identity and ethnic identity goes into how we feel about ourselves and how we like people to address us."

Jean's Attitudes Beliefs and Dispositions

First interview with Jean: I asked Jean to discuss her current academic and professional interests. Jean said she wanted to "work as a counselor in middle school really bad. I love the kids because all of their problems are so important to them right now."

Second interview with Jean: She described the "colorblind" stage that she experienced whereby she believed that "everyone is the same, people are people, and race doesn't matter. She said she has moved away from that position "race does matter, but it doesn't have to be the sole issue."

Jean's Cognitive Awareness and Learning

Second interview with Jean: Jean discussed coming to grips with her biases and stereotypes. She said "just between growing up and then coming into this program it's just a lot more enlightening than I think I've ever had classes be." She commented that she started thinking back on things "people have said to you since you were a little kid, and what that actually means; and then you're like, oh." I asked Jean to provide an example a most recent epiphany. She explained that her mother would see "Goth" people and expressed to Jean that "they're not good people; dressed in the black and they have the

black nail polish. So for a while it was a group that I would just avoid because my mom told me they were bad people. Jean said after meeting them “you’re like these are people too.” I asked Jean if her perspective of working with diverse clients broadened. She said there were definitely moments when “I never realized I might have to work with that group. It was on my mind; how would I approach that? She also notes that “as much as a person wants to say they would just look at a person as a person there are going to be factors that I don’t think you can block out.” I asked Jean what group would present a challenge for her. She said she thought “people who are just blatantly racist would bother me. I don’t want to say I don’t have a problem with serial killers.” Jean said, she thought that might be the “area that I have to work with.”

I asked Jean was she conscious of practicing culturally competent behavior. She said, “a lot more than I use to.” She described the “colorblind” stage that she experienced whereby she believed that “everyone is the same, people are people, and race doesn’t matter. She said she has moved away from that position “race does matter, but it doesn’t have to be the sole issue.” She notes that it was an important recognition for her “because if you are Bi-racial I want to be known as Bi-racial and I want people to see that.” She said the moment became clear for her after her biracial sister who is two years older than Jean reviewed a paper Jean wrote. After reading the paper her sister told her she was “colorblind.” Jean said at the time she thought “that was a good thing to be at the time because I’m not racist.” She explained that her sister became angry and asked Jean “what am I?” Jean said she replied, “You’re a human, you’re a girl.” She thinks because her sister was older and more comfortable with who she was at the time, and it “was something that mattered.” Jean notes that she slowly started to understand “where she was coming

from, and where other people were probably coming from.” I asked Jean if she thought her multicultural identity inspired her academic interests. Jean said she thinks it has but makes the point that her perspective is not solely unique. “I’m sure there are other people who are also Bi-racial, who are brought up differently. For me, I think it definitely has, I think I’ve experienced certain privileges with where I’ve been.” I asked Jean to elaborate on those privileges. She explained first she is “able bodied” and described her parents social economic status as “higher middle class.” She said she has access to “really good schools, and money to do things, and at the same time I understand when people follow you in stores you know.”

Second interview with Jean: Jean described “where I’ve gone since the last time we talked.” Jean feels that she has “really improved.” She said she has been able to “redefine what I think culture means to me,” She says she has included micro-systems of groups and how those groups are cultures within themselves, such as military cultures. “I don’t think really before that I thought about those as being cultures.” She said after she really thought about it “they kinda are, which provided a little epiphany for me... I was excited.” Jean said what really highlighted that point for her was her social justice and advocacy class. “Every week we look at a different group whether it’s an ethnic group or one of the micro-systems. Jean said it was interesting because every week you’re like ”oh my gosh I can’t believe I don’t know this was happening.” She commented that it supports the notion that “the more you learn the more you realize you don’t know.” I asked her to give me an example. She said in class they discussed people who were “transgendered, I know about it but I really didn’t know about; learning the struggles they go through and the culture within the community is really enlightening.”

Second interview with Jean: I asked Jean if there were any stereotypes or biases that she has been able to clarify. She said she is “apparently very angry at rich people.” I asked why she was angry at rich people, particularly when you said your parents are upper middle class. She explained that one of the videos from class was on classism. “I got mad at the people who are really, really rich, because I was like they just don’t get it.” Jean said she didn’t want to be irritated, but she “was irritated none the less; people having that much privilege looking down on people who are different.” I asked Jean could she compare her privilege to the privilege of those in the video. “I think in comparison I’ve not been able to do something because of lack of money.” She explained that money has never been an issue that stood in the way, “so I guess in that regard the privileges are the same.” I asked Jean if she thought her age was a help or hindrance. She explained she was “use to working with middle school age children. She said she thought the older age children can handle ‘more philosophical discussions and “still follow.”” Jean said the smaller children “I see their blank faces and I’m like, you didn’t understand that last sentence; so I have trouble sometimes adjusting my vocabulary to the younger set.” Jean and I discussed how she thought her students viewed her culturally. She said, “no one has even asked yet.” I asked how she would respond if the question is asked. “I’m Bi-racial.”

Third interview with Jean: I asked Jean to describe the journey she’s traveled this semester. Jean said she had “quite a few experiences this semester; such as my practicum site.” Jean spoke of the large “Asian Pacific population.” She said she had no previous experience with “the populations, there’s a lot of Samoan there.” Jean said she learned some very interesting “family dynamics “from the students regarding extended family

living together in the same household. She noted she found the dynamic to be very interesting “because it’s not something that my extended family does; not live with me.” I asked Jean if she thought the practice of extended family living together was a cultural practice. She said “possibly, it could partially be economical right now. She noted that “it probably more cultural because several of her Pacific Islander students were a bit “confused as to why most people don’t also live with their “aunts and uncles.”

I asked Jean if any of her biases or stereotypes had been clarified at this point. She said she didn’t know “if it changed anything. I think it has helped me think about it so I don’t stereotype as prevalently; sometimes it happens, can’t help it.”

Jean’s Skills and Abilities

Second interview with Jean: As Jean discussed the work load and practicum she said she was “working more at my practicum site to get the hours in.” I asked her what the demographics breakdown at her school was. She explained that “the highest percentages are African American and Asian Pacific, and probably Hispanic.” Jean said she started working with groups focusing on “team building skills and study skills every Friday morning and afternoon, and I also see kids who need to see somebody, mostly teacher referrals for fighting or not paying attention in class.” I asked Jean to share with me how she is implementing the skills she is learning in her theory classes. She said she is “getting to know the kids and where they’re coming from, prior to starting with my groups. I think that has really been helpful for me to figure out what their home life is like.” She noted that sometimes “you can see it translate to their school work; I use a lot of reflection like content and listening to their feelings.” Jean said she thinks that “helps build that initial relationship; because I think a lot of those kids really feel like adults don’t listen to them.”

Jean's Cultural Competence

1st interview with Jean: I asked Jean how she defined cultural competence. Jean said she thought “cultural competence is just awareness and also experience. Just really getting to know where you are with your prejudice or biases; and also know where other people are, and trying to get out the stereotypes that float around so much.”

3rd interview with Jean: I asked Jean if her notion of cultural competence has changed. She said a few weeks ago Dr. XXXXX talked about individual identity “it compared to an individualist society then a collectivist society; he talked about how a person will identify in the collectivist culture versus the individualist culture, and how they assign value to certain skill sets, and how it builds self-worth and self-concept. Jean said in regards to counseling “it puts the person first to figure out how far they actually identify with their ethnicity, and how they fit into their community.” I asked Jean how has she taken that awareness and knowledge and incorporated it into her practice. She said it has caused her to account for her “not perpetuating stereotypes, which I was always leery about doing because I don’t want to do that. So I thought I accounted for that better.”

Jean's Opinions about School

First interview with Jean: I asked Jean how the start of the semester was going for her. She said she was starting her second week and it’s already like wow, a lot of work.” When you entered into the program this past year what were your expectations? Jean said she figured she would be acquiring the “tool box” of skills that she needed to really “make an impact, and I think I’m getting that.” I asked Jean to describe her experience in the graduate program thus far. She replied “amazing, I’ve had a lot of fun here and I don’t

know if that just because it's the second week and the work load hasn't hit yet; but I really like the cohort." She noted when she realized at age twenty-two she was one of the youngest students in the cohort it was "hard getting used to," I asked if she saw that as a challenge. Jean said, "a little bit because a lot of the other people had experience teaching, or cops; my experience was I just got done with undergrad; so I think that was difficult to deal with." She said one her "uncles was also in the graduate program. She said she had parents in the same school with her as teachers but she "never had family in a class with me."

Jean described some challenges regarding the program. She said there have been "moments when I have wondered what the heck I'm doing, and I was like this is too hard and I can do it." I asked her how she got pass that? She explained that she began communicating with the members of her cohort, "I mean everyone in the cohort is in the same boat. We are all going through the same stuff."

Second interview with Jean: Jean discussed her concern regarding being offensive to her clients. She said she feels the "professors in the department have been very supportive, and have a good awareness about it [engaging clients] and have expressed to us that it as something important for us to grow into." She noted that it is something that "they promote as we become well rounded professionals." Jean said she is "thankful I'm in an environment that encourages that. I asked Jean about her experience with the cohort. She said it's great, I love everybody I think we are a really cool crew. I'm getting more involved, getting to know more people and some of the second year students are going to our CSI meetings more so that great."

3rd interview with Jean: I asked Jean were her expectations met this semester.

“Yeah, I love being in it [graduate program], in some ways it could be better. Like in advocacy class we talked a lot about the oppression of a lot of different cultures and I know it may be a little over presumptuous to assume; but what about Hawaiians. We talked about Native Americans, slaves and genocide in Rwanda. But I know there is so much to talk about.

I asked Jean what her greatest challenge was this semester. She said, “My greatest challenge was my supervisor walking out the door when I had to do my session. So I was all on my own and afraid, and I didn’t dare seem like it [laugh].”

Jean’s Self-Assessment

3rd interview with Jean: Twenty four hours before our final interview an electronic copy of the CCDM was sent to Jean with instructions to review the model. During our final meeting she was asked to assess her progress as it relates to the domains in the model. Jean said when it came to actual practice “I thought it was more of an apprentice. I don’t think I have competency in certain areas because I’m so new to counseling and I realize there is a lot of groups I haven’t worked with. I still have a long way to go.” I asked if she thought she might be further along in some areas as opposed to others. She said, “Yes, for example she said her attitudes and dispositions I may be approaching Proficient, because I am tolerant and accepting of other cultures. Partially because I’ve always been pretty open to people who are different; and part of that goes back to not knowing my own ethnicity.”

So how about your cognitive awareness and learning? She said she thought she was very open to hearing other peoples “story and just learning about their culture and how much they subscribe to their culture. She said she thinks she is an apprentice in this area

because “I’m willing but I’m not exactly at the best I can be.” Do you think your skills of engagement have developed? “I would put that at apprentice because I know that I’m in that toddler stage of getting into sessions and everything.”

CCDM Textural Structural Synthesis of Jean

Jean’s Attitudes Beliefs and Dispositions

First interview with Jean: I asked Jean how she identifies herself ethnically or culturally. She said “I really didn’t like doing that because I’m adopted. So, I don’t actually know the specifics; so I personally shy away from that. I identify white, which I’m probably ethnically not, and that’s just from my parents because they are you known. Jean notes what she concludes to be the root of the conflict. “I think that’s probably where I had problems; because I identify one way and when people look at me they are like “are you sure?” And I’m like yeah!”

Consequently due to her adoptive status Jean is unaware of her ethnic biological background, causing an identity struggle. Jean also discussed her “colorblindness” stage that she experienced whereby she believed that “everyone is the same, people are people, and race doesn’t matter. At this point I would suggest Jean was culturally encapsulated due to her “colorblindness.” She underemphasized the importance of difference.

She since said she has moved away from that position “race does matter, but it doesn’t have to be the sole issue.” Therefore, Jean appears to be in the early stages of learning the importance of cultural variables in counseling.

As Jean is struggles an emerging awareness of her cultural origin, identity and background, she appears to be exploring the relevance and importance of her racial /cultural identity as it relates to delivery of services.

Based on my discussions with Jean, Jean's level of competency in the area of attitudes, beliefs and dispositions fall in the area of novice approaching apprentice. Although Jean illustrated growth during the course of the semester as it relates to the importance of race, culture and the conceptualization of clients, and how that relates to delivery of services.

Jean's Cognitive Awareness and Learning

Second interview with Jean: Jean discussed coming to grips with her biases and stereotypes. I asked Jean to provide an example of a most recent epiphany. She explained that her mother would see "Goth" people and expressed to Jean that "they're not good people; dressed in the black and they have the black nail polish. So for a while it was a group that I would just avoid because my mom told me they were bad people." Jean said after meeting them "you're like these are people too."

As Jean discussed privilege she said after watching a video in class "I got mad at the people who are really, really rich, because I was like they just don't get it." Jean said she didn't want to be irritated, but she "was irritated none the less; people having that much privilege looking down on people who are different." I asked Jean could she compare her privilege to the privilege of those in the video. "I think in comparison I've not been able to do something because of lack of money." She explained that money has never been an issue that stood in the way, "so I guess in that regard the privileges are the same."

This would suggest Jean is in the early phase of gaining an understanding of her individual biases and stereotypes. She is also challenging personal attitudes, beliefs and preconceived notions regarding preconceived notions of individuals who are culturally different. Moreover, Jean's statements also inform the role of video presentations as a tool in the process of helping Jean attain a broader awareness of her individual privilege, and a

more in-depth understanding of the diverse aspects and levels of privilege.

Based on my discussions with Jean, my interpretation of her cultural competence in the area of cognitive awareness and learning fall are novice approaching apprentice.

Although, during the course of the semester Jean has illustrates growth toward her awareness and understanding of the levels and dimensions of privilege. She also illustrates early awareness and understanding of her individual biases and stereotypes.

Jean's Skills and Abilities

First interview with Jean: said "I never realized I might have to work with that group. It was on my mind; how would I approach that?"

I asked Jean what group would present a challenge for her. She replied "people who are just blatantly racist would bother me. I don't want to say I don't have a problem with serial killers." Jean said, she thought that might be the "area that I have to work with."

Second interview with Jean: Jean said she started working with groups focusing on "team building skills and study skills every Friday morning and afternoon, and I also see kids who need to see somebody, mostly teacher referrals for fighting or not paying attention in class." I asked Jean to share with me how she is implementing the skills she is learning in her theory classes. She said she is "getting to know the kids and where they're coming from, prior to starting with my groups. I think that has really been helpful for me to figure out what their home life is like." She noted that sometimes "you can see it translate to their school work; I use a lot of reflection like content and listening to their feelings." Jean said she thinks that "helps build that initial relationship; because I think a lot of those kids really feel like adults don't listen to them."

Based on my discussions with Jean, Jean's level of cultural competence in the area of

skills and abilities falls in the area emerging apprentice. For example, Jean demonstrates the early practice of “generic counseling skills and engagement. She is engaging clients in relationship building activities and strategies. She is actively attempting to create a safe climate for her students of diverse cultures to communicate. Jean admits to having no previous experience engaging middle school students. Consequently Jean has no interpersonal skills experience engaging this specific population of clients.

Jean’s Cultural Competence

Second interview with Jean: Jean feels that she has “really improved.” She said she has been able to “redefine what I think culture means to me,” She says she has included micro-systems of groups and how those groups are cultures within themselves, such as military cultures. “I don’t think really before that I thought about those as being cultures.” I asked her to give me an example. She said in class they discussed people who were “transgendered, I know about it but I really didn’t know about; learning the struggles they go through and the culture within the community is really enlightening.”

Based on my discussions with Jean her level of awareness and understanding is novice approaching apprentice. Jean’s statements suggest she is attempting to broaden her scope and depth of culture by exploring specific knowledge of individuals and their unique communities utilizing the curriculum being presented to her by instructors and supervisors in classroom environments.

Jean’s Opinions about School

First interview with Jean: As Jean discussed her expectations of the graduate program she said she figured she would be acquiring the “tool box” of skills that she needed to really “make an impact, and I think I’m getting that.”

Second interview with Jean: Jean described some challenges regarding the program. She said there have been “moments when I have wondered what the heck I’m doing, and I was like this is too hard and I can do it.” I asked her how she got pass that? She explained that she began communicating with the members of her cohort, “I mean everyone in the cohort is in the same boat. We are all going through the same stuff.”

Second interview with Jean: Jean discussed her concern regarding being offensive to her clients. She said she feels the “professors in the department have been very supportive, and have a good awareness about it [engaging clients] and have expressed to us that it as something important for us to grow into.” She noted that it is something that “they promote as we become well rounded professionals.”

Based on my discussions with her, Jean has expectations of learning, becoming more aware and gaining a “tool box” as she progresses through the graduate program. She is aware of her challenges relating to the program. Jean is aware of and utilizes her cohort as a support system. Jeans opinions about school are noted, and due to their frequency and relevance to the participant’s narrative it was coded as a theme. There is currently no identified level of competency on the CCDM. Therefore, a level of competency was not identified.

Jean’s Self-Assessment

Based on my discussions with Jean, Jean assessed her level of competency for the following core themes: Attitudes, beliefs and dispositions; Cognitive awareness and learning; Skills and abilities.

3rd interview with Jean: Jean described her level of competency regarding her attitudes, beliefs and dispositions as approaching proficient. She expresses awareness of

being “new to counseling. I realize that there are a lot of groups I haven’t worked with. I still have a long way to go. She feels she is moving toward being proficient due to her “tolerance and acceptance of others, and I’ve always been open to people who are different. Part of that goes back to not knowing my own identity.” In comparison, my interpretation of Jean’s level of competency in this area at the end of the semester is novice approaching apprentice. Jean discussed her “colorblindness” stage that she experienced whereby she believed that “everyone is the same, people are people, and race doesn’t matter. At this point I would suggest Jean was culturally encapsulated due to her “colorblindness.” She underemphasized the importance of difference. She since said she has moved away from that position “race does matter, but it doesn’t have to be the sole issue.” Therefore, I would suggest Jean is in the early stages of learning the importance of cultural variables in counseling.

Second interview with Jean: Jean discussed her cognitive awareness and learning pertaining to “coming to grips with her biases and stereotypes.” For example, it had been expressed to Jean through her mother that “Goth” people are “not good people.” Consequently Jean avoided social contact. She later learned after meeting them she arrived at the conclusion that “these are people too.” My interpretation is that Jean has progressed in the area of her cognitive awareness and learning. I would suggest that Jean has gained awareness and clarity of her personal biases and stereotypes during the semester approaching the apprentice level.

First interview with Jean: As Jean discussed her level of competency regarding her skills and abilities being at the apprentice level. She talked about the fact that she never realized that she may have to work with “that group.” She pondered the idea of “how

would I approach that?”

Second interview with Jean: Jean discussed her initial strategy working with groups was to focus on “team building and study skills.” For example, Jean said she is “getting to know the kids and where they’re coming from. It has really been helpful for me to figure out what their home life is like.” My interpretation is that Jean has progressed in the area of skills and abilities novice approaching apprentice. I would suggest Jean has made progress in her generic-interpersonal skills of engagement during the semester approaching apprentice level. For example, Jean posits that, “I would put that at apprentice because I know that I’m in that toddler stage of getting into sessions and everything.” **Helen’s**

Contextual Structural Descriptions

Helen's Background/Experience

Helen is a thirty-seven year old female who identifies herself ethnically as “white and I’m a mutt [German, Bohemian, Welsh].” Helen is a married “stay at home mom” with three children ages 7, 4 and 18 months, and is in the first year of the program.

First interview with Helen: Helen says she met her husband who is “Chinese” in a German class they were both enrolled in. Helen has two sisters, one of her sisters is an American citizen and the other is a German citizen. I asked Helen if her German sister lived here in the states she replied “no she lives in Berlin.” She explained that she is not her sister by birth they met in high school. Helen’s family participated in an exchange student program. Helen says “her sister “is a year older than her and “since that point she has been my German sister.”

As we continued to discuss her background Helen said her undergraduate degree is in “German, African American studies and clinical science.” She said she grew up helping graduate students that “stayed with my family in the summers for various programs.” Helen comments that “we had people from all over the world.” I asked Helen what was her ethnic background or identification. She replied, “Well generally I just like to say I’m white and I’m a mutt. I mean I could go into it but.” I asked her to please continue. She went on to explain that “there’s some German, Bohemian and then mainly some Welsh and English.”

We began to discuss Helen’s current academic interests she said she was interested in counseling, “specifically school counseling.” She went to say that her outside interests would probably have to do with “childhood or children’s development, just because I have

young children, so it's helpful." She said she would prefer to high school age students over elementary school children. She says she acquired her interest in becoming a counselor from her previous job at a "nonprofit" where she worked in a program that raised money for "patient services, upkeep of the organization, research." She said another inspiration was her German sister who is a "very successful life coach." Helen explained she had gone through coach training but didn't "feel like it was quite enough for me." She said she "wanted more experience" but as a stay at home mom she said "it's really hard to get that experience."

Helen discussed how the graduate program in counseling really appealed to her, partially because "it would run along the same schedule of what my kids we're in. So, it kind of gave me a little bit more freedom."

Helen's Attitudes Beliefs and Dispositions

First interview with Helen: Helen and I began to discuss her experiences in the counselor education program in regards to working with diverse clients. She said she "never worries" about working with diverse clients. "I mean my husband is Chinese." Helen explained that she had been to the Philippines four times. She says she know what it is like to be the only person around that "looks like me." She comments that "it's not really anything extraordinary to me to stand out, or not to stand out."

As we continued to discuss working with diverse cultures I asked Helen if she thought her cultural background would be a help or hindrance as she engaged diverse clients. She said, "Her parents were really good about welcoming diverse individuals into their environment. She says her father and grandmother were world travelers and had a great sense of "wanderlust" and the idea of traveling and "learning from other people was passed

down to her at an early age.” “You know you can learn a great deal if you keep an open mind.”

Second interview with Helen: Helen and I discussed “self-confrontation from a previous interview. We specifically discussed confronting her personal attitudes and beliefs. She explained that “my self-confrontation” was being explored through her “social justice and advocacy class.” She feels that is where her “notions of prejudice and the way oppression works, and you know there are those inherent beliefs about our U. S. government and the constitution and all of this and the ideals... and there’s the reality.” She mentioned that often she wanted to “be on the side of the ideals, and I think that often I did that to the detriment of reality.” This would demonstrate Helen’s engagement in the process of challenging her attitudes and beliefs. I asked for an example of a reality revealed. She explained for example when it comes to individuals living in poverty as opposed to those who do not live in poverty. “Someone who’s impoverished, if they don’t get the right food... we’re talking about a child, if they don’t know if one day from the next if they will have a roof over their head, or it’s not their own but relatives and they feel uncertainty in their situations, how are they going to do well in school, because their concentration level isn’t going to be there.” She concludes that there are many more children in need of help than the title 1 programs can assist. “There got to be a lot more that are slipping through the cracks... Yeah that was a big awareness for me”

Helen’s Cognitive Awareness and Learning

First interview with Helen: At the close of our first interview I asked if there was anything that she wanted to share with me about the counselor education program, or her personal growth. She explained her personal growth thus has been focused on “how I

want to be as a parent, and how I want my kids to grow up and, how I don't want them to be. So my growth early on has really come back to not wanting to always use close questions, not wanting to ask why." She explains that in such a "short period of time" the program is an agent in the development of "self-awareness."

Second interview with Helen: As we began our discussions concerning Helen's emerging awareness's and challenges she explained that one of the appreciations that she had was the "self-awareness piece" she says it was different than last semester "it was self-awareness of me on the inside. This time it's me in relation to the outside. I think that it is somewhat personal to yourself, what your ethics are, what your morals are, and what you're learning within the course, but it's also your relationship with other people and how you maintain your ethical standards"

As we talked Helen described an area that she found really interesting was "religious prejudice." She explained the awareness was raised for her "because of taking for granted how we view our nation as a Christian nation... when that's really not such an accurate portrayal. Helen went on to say that an example of the United States viewing Christianity as the "dominant religion" is the reference to religion "in pretty much every document." Helen also discussed her feelings that "we [United States] abuse religion to oppress, and you know annihilate people." She comments that even though she knew all of this information it brought things "home to me more." Helen notes that even though there has been the awareness "that I still don't know enough and it's a wise person says you can never stop knowing enough." I followed up my original question by asking Helen if she viewed this as an ongoing learning experience. She explained that this is an "awakening and it's me yanking my head out of the sand after so many years of being home with

children, and just wanting to survive and not wanting to consider much outside of my bubble.”

I asked if there was an a-ha moment when she came out of the sand that made you go ah okay? She said “I don’t know if there is exactly one thing.” Helen explained of the many challenges she is experiencing a primary challenge “is the fundamental challenge to change the way that I am with the rest of the world.”

Second interview with Helen: I asked Helen if she noted any similarity in dealing with her students and how she engaged her own children. She explained that the biggest difference that she noticed was after the “workshop” which was focused on identifies emotions and feelings. She described a walk she took with her 7 year old son as they talked about different emotions. “He’s got a pretty big vocabulary of those words, and I talked to a student today who doesn’t have that vocabulary. So it’s definitely interesting to see that difference.”

Helen’s Skills and Abilities

Second interview with Helen: I asked Helen to describe her experiences engaging individuals different from herself. “Well generally I like to watch and listen when it comes to something different from mine, because I just want to learn. If they are willing to talk I just want to listen. I can appreciate that, I’m not going to know everything especially when it comes to a different culture... and I very much like to learn.”

We discussed Helens early practicum experience at an elementary school that she judges to be 60-70 percent Hispanic. I asked her how that experience was going for her. She explained it was “going well.” She said it had only been a few weeks but she acknowledged that there would be some challenges. “It’s definitely going to be some kids

that will be more challenging than others or they will be challenging in different ways.”

For example, she expressed one of the learning experiences that she found rewarding was an activity at “camp make believe” which is a program that teaches children how to name feelings, and construct personal boundaries among other things. “I appreciate that that will help me to connect better with the kids.” She explained that it’s one thing to do counseling session with other counseling students but “it’s a whole different thing to go into a population of children who don’t have your same vocabulary, don’t necessarily have the willingness to speak, and then try to engage them.” I asked Helen if she was aware of herself using the skills she has been learning thus far. She said she has been attempting to utilize “open-ended questions, so that was definitely a challenge” She explained that it was a matter of her getting comfortable “in that situation feeling like I’ve got a bit more of a handle on it and just getting to know the kids a bit more. I think it’s about having to build a relationship.” She says she understands that the “kids have been through ups and downs. I would imagine that many of them are a little weary.”

Second interview with Helen: I asked Helen how she thought her emerging knowledge and awareness would affect her practice of cultural competency. “It’s so hard to say. I mean maybe that’s an advocacy thing. But where do I advocate, you know what I mean? If I’m working with kids the best I can do is really model for them and be there for them and help them grow their vocabulary, and make sure they have the services they need... maybe help them find mentors that are right for them, that can help them see a way out.” During our final conversation I asked Helen if there were any rewarding moments during the course of the semester. She said she thought the most rewarding moment came when she had the opportunity to watch a video [my secret self], describing the world view

of a transgendered child with her son who had been home ill during the week. She said she asked her son what he would do if he saw someone bullying a transgendered child. He replied, “I would tell them to stop, they’re just showing who they are inside.” Helen explained that she found that heartwarming “because he was really respecting who that child was.

Helen’s Cultural Competence

First interview with Helen: When asked what her definition of practicing cultural competence was she replied “I feel like culture is a... it’s a very broad term so I see it as being; cultural competence, being capable of understanding or having a broader self-understanding of diverse populations or you know, diverse groups, diverse personalities, you know.”

Helen’s Opinions about School

First interview with Helen: I asked Helen how the semester was going for her thus far. She replied it had been an interesting semester, “more challenging” than last semester. She explained that she felt the “workload is definitely a lot steeper this semester” than last semester. It appeared at the time that Helen found the quantity of work in relation to comprehension challenging. “Were supposed to grasp things at a much faster pace and the amount of reading we have is really a mountain of pages.” I asked if she thought the learning was on pace. She responded by saying “I think what we are learning is on pace. I think the amount of reading that we have been given for one course is a bit much and so that bothers me. Helen said her “time management “is a challenge. “It’s really been pushed; he’s climbing all over me because he [husband] needs his time with me too. Then the other two as well, so it’s made things a bit difficult.”

Second interview with Helen: As Helen and I discussed learning, I asked if she thought that the theoretical piece is relevant or not. She said that she thought it was good to be investigating different perspectives. “It’s good that we’re looking at things and trying to realize that sometimes there is a narrow line having to determine whether that narrow line is an ethical or moral issue as well.” I asked Helen if she saw a translation between the theoretical piece she was learning and practice aspect of the program. She said “Yeah!” She said for example “I thought Dr. XXXXX has really made it very interesting especially because he has taken relevant events.... So he used the shooting in Tucson as something to discuss and talk about the safety and well-being of students on campus as well as teachers and administrators.”

Helen informed me that the class that challenged her notion of “who I am as a person in relations to everybody else. So not only recognizing all the categories that I’m listed under, also how do I categorize other people?” Helen is demonstrating an emerging awareness of her own cultural bias and assumptions. Helen posits these rhetorical questions; is it a category? Is it a prejudice? Is it, you know snobbery? She says it also calls into question, how have I been aware and how have I not been aware?

Helen’s Self-Assessment

3rd interview with Helen: I asked Helen to reflect upon the process she has experienced this past semester. She said the thing that she really learned was that for the “last seven years have kept my head almost like stuck in the ground. I’ve been so concerned with mother hood and taking care of my kids that I haven’t really looked at the broader society as much as I should have.” She explained that she came up for air during the election year of President Obama and got involved and got her kids involved. Then

after the election “I went back to sticking my head in the ground.” I asked did her participation in the program cause her to take a closer look at the election of an African American President. She explained that for a while she “didn’t feel comfortable talking about it as much in my own house because my husband and I kind of, we’re on the same page about some things, we’re not quite there. So, he’s kind of silenced some of that for me, which is an eye opener for me this semester for me to think about how I haven’t felt comfortable to speak about some stuff that I believe in my own house. [Smile] Which I still need to talk to him about because I don’t know if he realizes that he brought about that change for me and so that’s not the change that I want to have... it good that we have different points of view, we’re both progressive in terms of social issues.”

3rd interview with Helen: I asked if there were any a-ha moments this semester. She replied, she had no real a-ha moment it was more like I just pulled my head out of the ground, and made me face the things I hadn’t been looking at.” I asked Helen does the practicum experience provide any opportunity for her to gain a better understanding of cultural behavior patterns. She explained that the actual amount of time they have to engage the students is limited to approximately 30 minutes. “I don’t know if even they can quite put a finger on that. I feel it would take a bit more time than we’re given.” I asked Helen for any suggestions he may have for the program. She said it would be helpful ‘If we knew that “certain techniques or certain ways of working with different populations worked instead of reinventing the wheel and search it out for ourselves.”

3rd interview with Helen: Twenty four hours before our final interview an electronic copy of the CCDM was sent to Helen with instructions to review the model. During our final meeting she was asked to assess her progress as it relates to the domains in the model.

Helen replied “I would say that with all of them I would say that I’m pretty proficient I’m sure that there are probably some areas where I’m kind of lacking.” I then asked her if there were any particular areas of growth that you’re aware of. Helen replied “I think I have grown over the course of the semester from but you know the thing is kind of the semester was like all my years of undergraduate jammed right into a good punch you know and so I think I was pretty proficient you know before I went into the working world and that you know I lost a lot of that proficiency not because I have kids but probably because I got lost in that kind of world.”

CCDM Textural Structural Synthesis of Helen

Helen’s Attitudes Beliefs and Dispositions

First interview with Helen: I asked Helen what was her ethnic background or identification. She replied, “Well generally I just like to say I’m white and I’m a mutt. I mean I could go into it but.” I asked her to please continue. She went on to explain that “there’s some German, Bohemian and then mainly some Welsh and English.”

Helen discussed working with diverse clients, she said “I never worry” about working with diverse clients. “I mean my husband is Chinese.” Helen explained that she had been to the Philippines four times. She says she know what it is like to be the only person around that “looks like me.”

Second interview with Helen: Helen stated that “my self-confrontation” was being explored through her “social justice and advocacy class.” She feels that is where her “notions of prejudice and the way oppression works, and you know there are those inherent beliefs about our U. S. government and the constitution and all of this and the ideals... and there’s the reality.” She mentioned that often she wanted to “be on the side of the ideals,

and I think that often I did that to the detriment of reality.”

Although Helen believes she would not have any difficulty engaging diverse individuals due to her experience of diverse communities in a social setting she has little or no knowledge or sense of reality in regards to racism, prejudice, discrimination and oppression. She lacks experience for example, exploration and discussing current relevant issues regarding racism, oppression and discrimination. Consequently, Helen is in the early stages of exploring her personal attitudes and beliefs as they relate to poverty, oppression, racism and discrimination.

Based on my discussions with Helen, Helen’s level of cultural competence in the area of attitudes, beliefs and disposition is novice approaching apprentice.

Helen’s Cognitive Awareness and Learning

Second interview with Helen: Helen discussed her growing awareness religious issues “because of taking for granted how we view our nation as a Christian nation... when that’s really not such an accurate portrayal. Helen went on to say that an example of the United States viewing Christianity as the “dominant religion” is the reference to religion “in pretty much every document.”

She comments that even though she knew all of this information it bought things “home to me more.” Helen notes even though there has been the awareness “that I still don’t know enough and it’s a wise person says you can never stop knowing enough.” I followed up my original question by asking Helen if she viewed this as an ongoing learning experience. She explained that this is an “awakening and it’s me yanking my head out of the sand after so many years of being home with children, and just wanting to survive and not wanting to consider much outside of my bubble.”

Helen is engaging in the early stages of “self-awareness.” She is participating in the process of challenging personal attitudes and beliefs. Helen is aware that she has little or no knowledge concerning certain issues. For example, Helen concludes that there are some emerging behavioral changes occurring, and there is a course to follow. Helen states that “self-awareness is one of the first steps.” Consequently Helen is in the early stages of challenging and assessing her biases, and stereotypes, and respecting the values of others.

Based on my discussions with Helen, Helen’s level of cognitive awareness and learning is novice approaching apprentice.

Helen’s Skills and Abilities

Second interview with Helen: Helen discussed her anxiety regarding diverse clients. She explained that it’s one thing to do counseling session with other counseling students but “it’s a whole different thing to go into a population of children who don’t have your same vocabulary, don’t necessarily have the willingness to speak and then engage them.” I asked Helen if she was aware of herself using the skills she has been learning thus far. She said she has been attempting to utilize “open-ended questions, so that was definitely a challenge” She explained that it was a matter of her getting comfortable “in that situation feeling like I’ve got a bit more of a handle on it and just getting to know the kids a bit more. I think it’s about having to build a relationship.”

Helen appears to be in the initial stages of acquiring an awareness of the need for culturally sensitive practices. She is beginning to conceptualize her clients as individuals. For example, Helen is aware of her current challenge to build relationships and acquire the ability to send and receive verbal and non-verbal messages accurately and appropriately.

She is also unsure of how to advocate for clients and develop therapeutic strategies at this point. I would suggest that she is in the early phases of acquiring experiences working with diverse clients.

Based on my discussions with Helen, Helen's level of cultural competence in the area of skills and abilities is novice approaching apprentice.

Helen's Cultural Competence

First interview with Helen: Based on my discussions with Helen her cultural competence in this area is novice approaching apprentice. I would suggest Helen is in the early stages of formulating a generic self-understanding of culture and cultural competence. For example, when asked what her definition of practicing cultural competence was she replied "I feel like culture is a... it's a very broad term so I see it as being; capable of understanding or having a broader self-understanding of diverse populations or you know, diverse groups, diverse personalities, you know."

Helen's Opinions about School

First interview with Helen: I asked Helen how the semester was going for her thus far. She replied it had been an interesting semester, "more challenging" than last semester. She explained that she felt the "workload is definitely a lot steeper this semester" than last semester. "Were supposed to grasp things at a much faster pace and the amount of reading we have is really a mountain of pages."

Helen said her "time management" is challenging. "It's really been pushed; he's climbing all over me because he [husband] needs his time with me too. Then the other two as well, so it's made things a bit difficult."

Helen said the class has challenged her notion of "who I am as a person in relations to

everybody else. So not only recognizing all the categories that I'm listed under, also how do I categorize other people?" Helen posits the rhetorical questions; is it a category? Is it a prejudice? Is it, you know snobbery? She says it also calls into question, how have I been aware and how have I not been aware?

Based on my discussions with Helen, Helen finds the program challenging due to demands on her time. For example, she states the program is also challenging her notions of bias, discrimination and oppression. Helen's opinions about school are noted, due to frequency and relevance to the participant's narrative it was coded as a theme. There is currently no identified level of competency on the CCDM. Therefore, a level of competency was not identified.

Helen's Self-Assessment

Based on my discussions with Helen, Helen believes her level of competency in the area of the following core themes: Attitudes, beliefs and dispositions; Cognitive awareness and learning; Skills and abilities.

3rd interview with Helen: Helen described her level of competency for the following core themes: Attitudes, beliefs and dispositions; cognitive awareness and learning; skills and abilities as being proficient. During our final meeting Helen was asked to assess her progress as it relates to the domains in the model. Helen replied "I would say that with all of them I would say that I'm pretty proficient I'm sure that there are probably some areas where I'm kind of lacking."

Second interview with Helen: Helen said the thing that she really learned was that for the "last seven years have kept my head almost like stuck in the ground. I've been so concerned with motherhood and taking care of my kids that I haven't really looked at the

broader society as much as I should have.”

In comparison, my interpretation is that Helen has experienced growth in her awareness and learning of “current social issues.” For example in my 3rd interview with Helen, I asked if there were any a-ha moments this semester. She replied, she had no real a-ha moment it was more like I just pulled my head out of the ground, and made me face the things I hadn’t been looking at.” Therefore, I would suggest Helens level of competency during the course of the semester is novice approaching apprentice.

3rd interview with Helen: I asked Helen does the practicum experience provide any opportunity for her to gain a better understanding of cultural behavior patterns. She explained that the actual amount of time they have to engage the students is limited to approximately 30 minutes. “I don’t know if even they can quite put a finger on that. I feel it would take a bit more time than we’re given.” In comparison to Helen’s self-assessment of proficiency, my interpretation is that Helen’s level of progress is approaching apprentice. For example, I asked Helen for any suggestions he may have for the program. She said it would be helpful ‘If we knew that “certain techniques or certain ways of working with different populations worked instead of reinventing the wheel and search it out for ourselves.”

Laura's Contextual Structural Descriptions

Laura's Background/Experiences

Laura is a 37 year old female who identifies her ethnic background as “very western or Eurocentric.” She said her family has been “here [United States] for many generations.” Laura explained that her family is from “England, Ireland, Germany and I think Poland.”

First interview with Laura: Laura said she has no religious affiliations, “my family is Protestant.” Laura says “both of my parents are white.” She said her father is “extremely conservative” and it was not uncommon for him to be listening to “Rush Limbaugh.” She said her mother is in the “middle of the road” politically. Laura said her mom took her and her sister to a “non-denominational church” regularly until she was approximately eight years old. She explained that “I think Christian morals and values influenced my morals and values fairly heavily until I reached high school.”

Laura said her parents divorced when she was nine years old. She said it was “not an amicable divorce” and the tension was visible to “my sister and I.” After the divorce Laura said “my sister and I lived with my dad one year because my mom was homeless.” She explained that her mom stayed with various friends while she attempted to find a job “and save money” to get a place of her own. Laura said she watched as her mom worked full-time and put herself through school and raised “my sis and I.” Laura says despite her mother’s “hard work we still lived below the poverty line. “We lived in government subsidized housing for many years and I remember hearing my mom crying at night because she was so worried about money. She said her dad was comfortably middle class and it was “difficult for me to live my life in two completely different worlds. My dad had no sympathy for my mom and blamed her for our situation.” She said as she got older she

abandoned “more of her dad’s conservative influence” because it did not match with “what I was experiencing and seeing in other parts of my life.” She said, “It has been an ongoing process and there are still times I worry... what dad will think?”

Laura said she spent her adolescence in “complete denial” about the “fact that I am gay.” She explained it was an issue that she “struggled with and hid for many years because I was afraid of what being gay meant about me as a person, and what people would think about me... especially my family.” She said she didn’t come out until she was twenty-one years old, initially to her close friends who were “very supportive.” Laura explains that she came out to her parents within the year. Laura said at this point “most of my friends and family know I’m gay and that “I live with my partner.” Laura made the point that she has been “fortunate in that I have never been attacked and have experienced relatively few verbal assaults because of my sexual orientation.” Although Laura has only suffered few verbal assaults the events she has experienced “are painful and damaging, even if only for a little while. I can safely walk down the street holding my partners hand. We can’t get married, and some of our neighbors dislike us merely because of our same sex relationship.”

Laura’s Attitudes Beliefs and Dispositions

Second interview with Laura: Laura and I discussed her cultural identity she said “I guess western of Eurocentric type of background.” She noted that her “whole family “had been in America from England, Ireland, Germany and Poland for generations.” Laura explained that her “family is Protestant” her mom took Laura and her sister to “a non-denominational church regularly until she was approximately eight years old.” Laura said she thinks “Christian morals and values influenced my morals and values very heavily

until I reached high school.”

During our conversation I asked Laura if she had a military background. She said that her background was in “law enforcement, but this [counseling] is kind of exciting for me actually because it’s making me do something that I probably wouldn’t have otherwise done. So it will be interesting to see, maybe if this kinda changes my focus.”

Second interview with Laura: Laura and I discussed how she initially became interested in becoming a counselor. She stated she went into law enforcement because she wanted to “help people,” but what I found out was that people weren’t getting help. What people need is not necessarily to go to jail or another citation. Things like that started to peak my interest. She said about three years into her law enforcement career she responded to a suicide call in the dorms and “it shook me up pretty bad, so I went to counseling for a little while afterwards, and the counselor she worked with expressed to her after termination of services “Lisa if you ever leave law enforcement I want you to go to school to become a counselor.” Laura said that incident made her think about it and then “I started working with sexual abuse survivors and domestic abuse survivors.” I asked her what shook her up so much about the call to the dorms. She explained that she was responding to the call from the perspective that the suicide was in progress. When she arrived Laura said she attempted to directly attend to the individual and he was already dead as she kneeled beside him. She said it was really shocking to think that I was going into this life saving situation... but that wasn’t it at all.”

3rd interview with Laura: Laura discussed a rewarding aspect of the semester. She said she felt that she was “growing becoming, I wouldn’t say a better person because I don’t think I was a bad person before. I guess I’m more opened minded now.” She

explained that she is a lot more informed and “I think it increased my empathy a lot, because for me it’s impossible to hear stories like we’ve heard and then not care.”

Laura’s Cognitive Awareness and Learning

First interview with Laura: I asked Laura about any epiphanies she may have experienced thus far. She discussed a documentary that she watched in her social justice and advocacy class concerning events in Darfur. Laura explained that she understood that there was an issue in Darfur “but I really didn’t know what was really happening over there. Some of our readings talk about white privilege and it made me realize I don’t know anything about that because I don’t have to deal with it on a day to day basis.” Laura is aware that she has opportunities “I can do my thing and no one’s going to bother me because of the color of my skin.” Moreover, Laura has parallel personal experience with verbal abuse and discrimination due to her sexual orientation.

Laura expressed the fact that “I was ashamed of my ignorance and it’s not because I don’t care, it’s because I’ve never known anything different in my life. So now I’m starting to see these things and hear things from people who do experience prejudice on a regular basis. It makes me realize I have an obligation to stand up and do something about it too.” Laura went on to explain that her awareness has been expanded and now she is aware of her “ignorance and my privilege and all the benefits granted me and now I have the responsibility to do something about that.” I asked Laura how she planned on making herself responsible. She said she thought the “first step is being educated, learning and talking to people who are different than me. Finding out what their life is like on a daily basis, and what issues they are facing living in this society.” Laura and I discussed the importance of gaining theoretical background knowledge. She replied, “Yeah, to get it

but to apply it. So I think practicum and internship are great because we're getting the theory and the classroom stuff but at the same time we're working so we are able to see how it actually works... or maybe doesn't." As we closed our first interview I asked Laura where she wants to take her journey to next. She said she wants to "keep learning at this point to build on my skills."

Second interview with Laura: Laura discussed starting her practicum experience. I asked her how things were going. She said things were "going well, the kids are great, they're so smart and worldly, even the really little ones." I asked what she meant by worldly. She said, "They've seen a lot. Whether it's like family members who are on drugs, or living in a neighborhood where there's a lot of crime and a lot of police presence. So you know they see things that I didn't see until I was much older. So I mean there pretty wise for their age." Laura makes the point that she had never really interacted with children who had experienced so much in such a short period of life.

I asked Laura since our first meeting has she looked further into her own ethnicity or cultural background. She said, "Yeah that is primarily what I wrote about in my reflection." Laura said she was taking some time to think about, "what is my culture?" She began to reflect on her mother taking Laura and her sister to church and how that impacted her life. "I still recognize how that has influenced my life." Laura notes that "I have no religious affiliation at this point." She explained how she really had to think about "taking it for granted what my culture and my religious background is, because no one ever challenged me." She explained that a variety of topics are discussed in her social justice and advocacy class, including video documentaries and readings, "and making connections between all those. It's interesting to be able to read things that other students are saying

[internet class postings], and a face to face meeting with students who are from a completely different background, so it has really raised my awareness.” For example, Laura notes “the idea that people who are poor want to be poor, and the idea that poor people are lazy. Most poor people work way more hours than rich people.” Laura noted that it has been really interesting “in one of the books that we have provides a list of privileges that are granted to the dominant culture. She said some of the things that she hadn’t thought about before are that “in fact I’m surrounded by people who look like me... you know other white people. If I go to the store to buy a mother’s day card I’m going to find a card with white people on it, and culturally appropriate toys. I never thought about that.” I asked Laura how you feel when you aren’t a member of the dominant group. She said she feels, “cautious, skeptical, and hesitant. She noted, “Sometimes scared depending on the situation.”

I asked Laura if this was something that she was aware of before this semester. She said she was aware of it to a certain extent “because my parents divorced when I was around nine.” Laura said her dad was comfortably middle class, but she and her mom and sister struggled financially. “My mom was poor, so I mean I grew up from the age of nine on very poor.”

Second interview with Laura: Laura discussed changes in her perspective were initiated by her father’s conservative attitudes, particularly when it came to the divorce of Laura’s mother. His attitude was “he didn’t owe her anything, and he didn’t owe us anything extra.” Laura said this made her realize that “the things that I had been taught weren’t necessarily true. Laura said the older she got the more “aware I was, I started to see that my dad’s conservative line of thinking didn’t match up to what I was seeing and

what I was experiencing in my life.”

I asked Laura if she thought her experiences provided some insight into the populations that she is currently engaging. She said she thought it did because “I remember what it was like to be the kid that didn’t have anything that was name brand.” She said she had a “lot of hand me down cloths.” She explained once you get into middle school and high school there were some kids that would hang out with her one on one, but when they were with their friends they would not acknowledge her. She said “it was because I wasn’t smart, or I wasn’t funny, it was because I was poor you know.” Consequently, Laura’s social economic status caused her to experience stereotyping and discrimination. She notes that because she was poor “I wasn’t cool!”

I asked Laura how her practicum students view her culturally or ethnically. She said most don’t really seem to mind. Laura believes this may be the case because “they already spend time with white adults in the school setting, but some are still skeptical about what my agenda is.” Laura told me that she had been working with her students for approximately five weeks and she was “in a trust building phase” with her students, but it was difficult to pull them out of class because they were preparing for testing.

Laura’s Skills and Abilities

Second interview with Laura: I asked Laura if she had any previous cultural competence training. She said when she served as a residence assistant in the dorms “we did four hours of diversity training.” She said the experience was awkward because there were some “sensitive topics “, such as have you been sexually assaulted or, things like that... people didn’t really feel comfortable just in a group of people they didn’t know very well disclosing.” As Laura and I discussed how she initiated relationship building with

her students. She said she explained to all of them that “I’m not here to get them in trouble, or be a disciplinarian. That’s not my role here and I want to help them work on things that are important to them... just trying to listen using my basic skills and reflecting back to them, and hearing what they are saying.” I asked did she observe herself applying her learned skills. She said “Yeah, it’s not just stuff that I’m memorizing, these things are becoming tools. I still have to stop and think about what I want to say next, or how I should say it, or what direction I should move in. It’s becoming a little more natural I guess [smile]. I asked Laura if her apprehension had subsided a bit now that she has started her practicum. She said, “Yeah, I think so, I feel a lot more confident now.” She said even though she has to stop and think about things she has learned to spend some time “before a session or after a session thinking about the case and conceptualize it.”

At the close of our second interview I asked Laura if there was anything that she would like to add. She continued to say that the semester has been a “really good experience” She explained that the classes dealt with some really “heavy stuff, I mean emotionally it’s emotionally draining.” She said there are some days that “I don’t want to think about it” “I think that’s because of my privilege, right?” She notes, that I can go home and not think about it, “but other people have to live in it every single day.” She said she thinks there’s “some guilt that comes with it too... a lot.” Laura explained that the guilt part was a challenge because “I don’t know how to right all the wrongs, so I feel like now I got more awareness... But I don’t know what to do with it.” She said for example, “If I see something happening I can speak up and say something about it, or try to intervene. So, I guess on that small level I can make differences,” as Laura began to reflect she said “when you think about it have you changed things, systemic issues, social issues... it’s so hard.”

She also posits “how do you partner with people who are different from you without being condescending... especially when people are so skeptical.”

Laura’s Cultural Competence

First interview with Laura: I asked Laura to define cultural competence from her perspective. She said first “being aware of my own cultural background and values, and then being aware of other people’s culture... trying to learn as much as I can so that I’m interacting with people in a way that I guess is consistent with their values and their beliefs instead of posing my own on people.”

Laura’s Opinions about School

First interview with Laura: I asked Laura how her experience in the graduate program been thus far. She said that “it’s been great, stressful and it’s a lot of work, but it’s amazing every time I think I can’t possibly learn anymore or I can’t learn anymore about myself, I do... and it’s just mind blowing.”

Laura and I discussed her upcoming practicum assignment. I asked would she be starting practicum this semester. She said her first visit would be “this week” at a local elementary school. Laura explained that since being in the mental health program initially she thought she would be working with U. S. veterans. She said it was a surprise to her “that I was going to be working in elementary school.” She said she likes “little kids” and considered working with children once she graduates. I asked if she had any other professional aspirations. Laura said down the road “working with trauma victims... As Laura reflected on her comments she noted that “I mean of course children could be trauma victims too.” She said she was a “little apprehensive because the only practice that I’ve done thus far is with other adults. So, I haven’t worked with children in any kind of

counseling aspect before.” I asked how she was initially going to deal with that inexperience. She said she was initially just trying to “breathe” [smile], and once she gets into the school setting she said she wants to “talk to people and start learning.”

Second interview with Laura: I asked Laura if she thought practicum was helpful? She said, she thought “it was really helpful.” I asked her to how she thought it was helpful. She explained that it has “given me an opportunity to work on some of those basic skills before I get into internship. My supervisor is great! She spends a lot of time with me helping me to process and debrief, giving me feedback about what I’m doing well and think about things I can do different.” Consequently, Laura is engaging in a mentorship process with her supervisor.” She notes that it is very helpful “because it’s not like I’m just thrown out there because I’m working with demographics that in a lot of ways is so different from me.” Laura feels that practicum has given her an opportunity to “get experience working with people of other ethnicities that I hadn’t planned on working with.”

I asked Laura how her experience in the graduate program was going thus far. “It’s been great, I mean it’s been stressful and it’s a lot of work. But it’s amazing, just every time I think I can’t possibly learn anymore, or I can’t learn any more about myself, I do and it’s just mind blowing.” Could you share an epiphany you had? “Well this weekend our social justice class we watched a documentary of Darfur. I knew like there was an issue but I really didn’t know what really was happening over there. The way the union was completely not handling the situation. Some of our readings are talking about white privilege and it made me realize, it’s so true; I don’t know anything about that because I don’t have to deal with it on a day to day basis. I get up and I do my thing and no one’s

gonna bother me because of the color of my skin.”

As our second interview came to a close I asked Laura if there was anything that she would like to add. “Yes I enjoyed our interview today; it’s been a good experience.” Do you want to talk about the experience? “Sure, it’s been kind of a rough semester and I think a lot of it is because of the social justice class... because it’s really heavy stuff, and I really like the class and I’m learning a ton, but it’s emotionally draining. There are some days where I don’t want to think about it, you know? I just... because it’s so much, but then that’s my privilege right, because I can go home and not think about it, but other people can’t because other people have to live it every single day.”

Laura’s Self-Assessment

3rd interview with Laura: Laura spoke of rewards. She said that it’s really “rewarding I find that now I make a lot less snap judgments.” Laura explained as a law enforcement officer “you have to make quick judgments about people.” Laura said she is a lot more conscious of “interacting” with people different than herself.

Twenty four hours before our final interview Laura was provided an electronic copy of CCDDM to assess herself through the lens of the model. She stated “I’m somewhere between apprentice and proficient.” Well let’s talk about each category, let’s talk in terms of your attitude and beliefs. “I think mostly heavily on the apprentice, because I’m still becoming aware of all my biases and assumptions.” How about your cognitive awareness and learning? “Probably about the same area because I’m still learning about similarities and differences between various cultures and figuring out where I need to grow to become more confident.” How about your skills and abilities? I think I’m an apprentice level, this semester I really understand the need for cultural competence and how it really impacts

everything with your client.”

CCDM Contextual Structural Synthesis of Laura

Laura’s Attitudes Beliefs and Dispositions

Second interview with Laura: Laura explained as she got older she abandoned “more of her dad’s conservative influence” because it did not match with “what I was experiencing and seeing in other parts of my life.” She said, “It has been an ongoing process and there are still times I worry... what dad will think?”

Laura said she spent her adolescence in “complete denial” about the “fact that I am gay.” She explained it was an issue that she “struggled with and hid for many years because I was afraid of what being gay meant about me as a person, and what people would think about me... especially my family.”

She said about three years into her law enforcement career she responded to a suicide call in the dorms and “it shook me up pretty bad, so I went to counseling for a little while afterwards, and the counselor she worked with expressed to her after termination of services “Laura if you ever leave law enforcement I want you to go to school to become a counselor.” Laura said that incident made her think about it and then “I started working with sexual abuse survivors and domestic abuse survivors.”

3rd interview with Laura: Laura discussed a rewarding aspect of the semester. She said she felt that she was “growing becoming, I wouldn’t say a better person because I don’t think I was a bad person before. I guess I’m more opened minded now.”

Laura’s law enforcement experience provided previous opportunity for her to engage diverse individual. She has also utilized counseling services herself, and worked with victims of abuse. Consequently Laura has some knowledge of diverse cultures and

cultural variables needed in counseling. Therefore, Laura comes to training with some background experience.

Based on my discussions with Laura's, Laura's level of cultural competence in the area of attitudes, beliefs and disposition as apprentice

Laura's Cognitive Awareness and Learning

Second interview with Laura: Laura discussed a documentary that she watched in her social justice and advocacy class concerning events in Darfur. Laura explained that she understood that there was an issue in Darfur "but I really didn't know what was really happening over there. Some of our readings talk about white privilege and it made me realize I don't know anything about that because I don't have to deal with it on a day to day basis."

Laura expressed the fact that "I was ashamed of my ignorance and it's not because I don't care, it's because I've never known anything different in my life. So now I'm starting to see these things and hear things from people who do experience prejudice on a regular basis. It makes me realize I have an obligation to stand up and do something about it too

Laura is demonstrating a limited amount of experiences in cultural discussions. She is identifying areas of growth and understanding. This lack of knowledge and awareness pertaining to national and international issues such as poverty and privilege has caused Laura to have feelings of "guilt and shame" because of her lack of knowledge and awareness. Therefore, Helen had little or no knowledge of the effects of poverty, oppression, racism and discrimination of specific cultural, ethnic and community groups.

Based on my discussions with Laura, Laura's level of cultural competence in the area

of cognitive awareness and learning is novice approaching apprentice.

Laura's Skills and Abilities

Second interview Laura: Laura and I discussed how she initiated relationship building with her students. She said she explained to all of them that "I'm not here to get them in trouble, or be a disciplinarian. That's not my role here and I want to help them work on things that are important to them... just trying to listen using my basic skills and reflecting back to them, and hearing what they are saying."

I asked did she observe herself applying her skill. She said "Yeah, it's not just stuff that I'm memorizing, these things are becoming tools. I still have to stop and think about what I want to say next, or how I should say it, or what direction I should move in. It's becoming a little more natural I guess {smile}."

Laura appears to be in the initial stages of relationship building with students. She is initiating basic interviewing skills in an attempt to create a comfortable environment for her clients. Laura is also in the beginning stages of creating a context for herself to recognize and understand how diverse cultures share common ground and uniqueness. Therefore, Laura demonstrates a less than adequate experience level engaging diverse clients in both a verbal and non-verbal fashion.

Based on my discussions with Laura, Laura's level of cultural competence in the area of skills and abilities is novice approaching.

Laura's Cultural Competence

First interview with Laura: I asked Laura to define cultural competence from her perspective. She said first "being aware of my own cultural background and values, and then being aware of other people's culture... trying to learn as much as I can so that I'm

interacting with people in a way that I guess is consistent with their values and their beliefs instead of posing my own on people.”

Based on my discussions with Laura, I would suggest Laura has a basic understanding of cultural competence, and therefore she is in the process of acquiring a broader more in-depth awareness and understanding of cultural competence. My interpretation is that Helen is novice approaching apprentice.

Laura’s Opinions about School

Second interview with Laura: I asked her to how she thought it was helpful. She explained that it has “given me an opportunity to work on some of those basic skills before I get into internship. My supervisor is great! She spends a lot of time with me helping me to process and debrief, giving me feedback about what I’m doing well and think about things I can do different.”

Consequently, Laura is engaging in a mentorship process with her supervisor.” For example, she notes that it is very helpful “because it’s not like I’m just thrown out there because I’m working with demographics that in a lot of ways is so different from me.”

Jean’s opinions about school are noted, due to their frequency and relevance to the participant’s narrative it was coded as a theme. There is currently no identified level of competency on the CCDM. Therefore, a level of competency was not identified.

Laura’s Self-Assessment

Based on my discussions with Laura, Laura assessed her level of competency for the following core themes:

3rd interview with Laura: Laura described her level of competency regarding her attitudes, beliefs and dispositions as somewhere between apprentice and proficient. In

comparison, my interpretation of her competency at the end of this semester in this area is approaching apprentice. For example, she said about three years into her law enforcement career she responded to a suicide call in the dorms and “it shook me up pretty bad, so I went to counseling for a little while afterwards, and the counselor she worked with expressed to her after termination of services “Laura if you ever leave law enforcement I want you to go to school to become a counselor.” Laura said that incident made her think about it and then “I started working with sexual abuse survivors and domestic abuse survivors.”

First interview with Laura: Laura described her cognitive awareness and learning as somewhere between apprentice and proficient. In comparison, my interpretation of Laura’s level of cognitive awareness and learning at the end of the semester is approaching apprentice level. For example, Laura explained that she understood that there was an issue in Darfur “but I really didn’t know what was really happening over there. Some of our readings talk about white privilege made me realize I don’t know anything about that because I don’t have to deal with it on a day to day basis.”

Second interview with Laura: Laura described her level of competency regarding her skills and abilities as apprentice. In comparison my interpretation is that Laura has made growth in this area and at the end of this semester is approaching apprentice. For example, I asked Laura if her apprehension had subsided a bit now that she has started her practicum. She said, “Yeah, I think so, I feel a lot more confident now.” She said even though she has to stop and think about things she has learned to spend some time “before a session or after a session thinking about the case and conceptualize it.”

Table 3

Cultural Competency Domains Model Interpretive Summary

Codes	Jean	Helen	Laura
Attitudes, beliefs and dispositions	Novice-approaching apprentice. Illustrated growth during the course of the semester as it relates to the importance of race, culture and the conceptualization of clients, and how that relates to delivery of services.	Novice approaching apprentice. Helen's engaging in the process of challenging her attitudes and beliefs. I asked for an example of a reality revealed. She explained when it comes to individuals living in poverty as opposed to those who do not live in poverty. "Someone who's impoverished, if they don't get the right food... we're talking about a child, if they don't know if one day from the next if they will have a roof over their head, or it's not their own but relatives and they feel uncertainty in their situations, how are they going to do well in school, because their concentration level isn't going to be there."	Apprentice. Laura comes to the program with helping experience as a police officer. I guess I'm more opened minded now." She explained that she is a lot more informed and "I think it increased my empathy a lot, because for me it's impossible to hear stories like we've heard and then not care."
Cognitive awareness and learning	Novice-approaching apprentice. Jean attained a broader awareness of her individual privilege, and a more in-depth understanding of the diverse aspects and levels of privilege.	Novice approaching apprentice. She described a walk she took with her 7 year old son as they talked about different emotions. "He's got a pretty big vocabulary of those words, and I talked to a student today who doesn't have that vocabulary. So it's definitely interesting to see that difference."	Novice approaching apprentice. Laura discussed starting her practicum experience. I asked her how things were going. She said things were "going well, the kids are great, they're so smart and worldly, even the really little ones." I asked what she meant by worldly. She said, "They've seen a lot. Whether it's like family members who are on drugs, or living in a neighborhood where there's a lot of crime and a lot of police presence. So you know they see things that I didn't see until I was much older. So I mean there pretty wise for their age."
Skills and abilities	Novice approaching apprentice. Jean demonstrates the early practice of "generic counseling skills and engagement. She is engaging clients in relationship building activities and strategies. She is actively attempting to create a safe climate for her students of diverse cultures to communicate. Jean admits to having no previous	Novice approaching apprentice. But where do I advocate, you know what I mean? If I'm working with kids the best I can do is really model for them and be there for them and help them grow their vocabulary, and make sure they have the services they need... maybe help them find mentors that are right for them, that can help them see a way out."	Novice approaching apprentice. Laura explained that the guilt part was a challenge because "I don't know how to right all the wrongs, so I feel like now I got more awareness... But I don't know what to do with it." She said for example, "If I see something happening I can speak up and say something about it, or try to intervene. So, I guess on that small level I can make differences," as Laura began to reflect she said "when

	experience engaging middle school students. Consequently Jean has no interpersonal skills experience engaging this specific population of clients.		you think about it have you changed things, systemic issues, social issues... it's so hard."
Cultural competence	Novice approaching apprentice. Jean is attempting to broaden her scope and depth of culture by exploring specific knowledge of individuals and their unique communities	Novice approaching apprentice. Helen is in the early stages of formulating a generic self-understanding of culture and cultural competence. replied "I feel like culture is a... it's a very broad term so I see it as being; cultural competence, being capable of understanding or having a broader self-understanding of diverse populations or you know, diverse groups, diverse personalities, you know."	Novice approaching apprentice. Laura has a basic understanding of cultural competence, and therefore she is in the process of acquiring a broader more in-depth awareness and understanding of cultural competence. For example, "being aware of my own cultural background and values, and then being aware of other people's culture... trying to learn as much as I can so that I'm interacting with people in a way that I guess is consistent with their values and their beliefs instead of posing my own on people."
Opinions about school There is currently no identified level of competency on the CCDM. Therefore, a level of competency was not identified.	Jean has expectations of learning, becoming more aware and gaining a "tool box" as she progresses through the graduate program.	Helen finds the program challenging due to demands on her time. She states the program is also challenging her notions of bias, discrimination and oppression.	"It's been great, I mean it's been stressful and it's a lot of work. But it's amazing, just every time I think I can't possibly learn anymore, or I can't learn any more about myself, I do and it's just mind blowing." Could you share an epiphany you had? "Well this weekend our social justice class we watched a documentary of Darfur. I knew like there was an issue but I really didn't know what really was happening over there.

Self-assessment	<p>Attitudes, beliefs and dispositions approaching proficient. I realize that there are a lot of groups I haven't worked with. I still have a long way to go. She feels she is moving toward being proficient due to her "tolerance and acceptance of others, and I've always been open to people who are different. Part of that goes back to not knowing my own identity."</p> <p>Jean described her level of Cognitive Awareness and Learning as Apprentice. Jean feels like she is "very open to hearing other people's story and just learning about their cultures and how much they subscribe to their culture." She described herself as willing but, "I'm not exactly at my best."</p> <p>Skills and abilities apprentice. "I would put that as apprentice because I know that I'm in that toddler stage of getting into sessions and everything."</p>	<p>Attitudes, beliefs and dispositions Proficient. "I would say that with all of them I would say that I'm pretty proficient I'm sure that there are probably some areas where I'm kind of lacking."</p> <p>Cognitive awareness and learning Proficient. Helen said the thing that she really learned was that for the "last seven years have kept my head almost like stuck in the ground. I've been so concerned with motherhood and taking care of my kids that I haven't really looked at the broader society as much as I should have."</p> <p>Skills and Abilities is Proficient. She said it would be helpful "If we knew that "certain techniques or certain ways of working with different populations worked instead of reinventing the wheel and search it out for ourselves."</p>	<p>Attitudes, beliefs and dispositions as between apprentice and proficient. "I think mostly heavily on the apprentice, because I'm still becoming aware of all my biases and assumptions."</p> <p>Cognitive awareness and learning as between apprentice and proficient. "Probably about the same area because I'm still learning about similarities and differences between various cultures and figuring out where I need to grow to become more confident."</p> <p>Skills and Abilities as apprentice. I think I'm an apprentice level, this semester I really understand the need for cultural competence and how it really impacts everything with your client."</p>
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Summary

The purpose of this study is to highlight the struggles, challenges, triumphs, and epiphanies associated with the early acquisition of key characteristics related to developing cultural competence with Masters-level counselor education students.

The domains identified by the ACA and the APA are: (a) attitudes beliefs and dispositions; (b) cognitive awareness and learning; (c) Skills and abilities. In an effort to train and prepare counselor educators to serve an increasingly diverse client population, the curriculum for most Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) Accredited Masters Level Counselor Education Programs have made modifications to the curriculum by introducing graduate students to theory and practice that is foundational or “generic” to counselor education practices (2008). This study closes the gap between theory and practice by conducting contemporary research on the experiences and factors that reveal the emergence and ultimately the successful acquisition of key characteristics and traits.

Cultural competence in counselor education results from the fusion of generic-best practices with cultural sensitivity, awareness, and response. For use in this study, generic-best practices were defined in terms of: (a) the basic ability to develop personal relationships (interpersonal skills); (b) client conceptualization (e.g., conceptualization of the client in psychological versus physical terms); and (c) self-appraisal of one’s ability to perform competently in the role of counselor (cognitive skills).

Participant narratives from this study suggest as students gain cultural historical knowledge of specific cultures, groups or individuals they begin the process of challenging their attitudes, beliefs and dispositions regarding areas of culture, race, ethnicity, gender,

age, religion and sexual orientation. For example Jean discussed coming to grips with her biases and stereotypes. She said “just between growing up and then coming into this program it’s just a lot more enlightening than I think I’ve ever had classes be.” During our final interview I asked Jean if her notion of cultural competence has changed. She said a few weeks ago Dr. XXXXX talked about individual identity “he compared it to an individualist society versus a collectivist society. He talked about how a person will identify in the collectivist culture; versus the individualist culture, how they assign value to certain skill sets, and how it builds self-worth and self-concept. Jean said in regards to counseling “it puts the person first to figure out how far they actually identify with their ethnicity and how they fit into their community. Students also struggled in their early attempts to practice interpersonal skills as they engaged diverse clients. For example, Helen explained that it’s one thing to do counseling session with other counseling students but “it’s a whole different thing to go into a population of children who don’t have your same vocabulary, don’t necessarily have the willingness to speak, and then try to engage them.”

As the traits and characteristics are constructed and arranged the results are a “profile” of an individual who can be considered to be culturally competent. Although research does not inform what an individual will experience or go through as she tries to acquire and develop these traits and characteristics. In certain respects what remains is an analysis whereby we have vision of the objectives, but cannot discern the process of the acquisition and growth.

I suggest what has been missing in the literature is investigation of the linkage from theoretical perspectives to practice. For example, understanding the importance of initial

development and practice of interpersonal skills needed to engage diverse clients.

Arredondo and colleagues (1996) highlights the significance of interpersonal skills when he posits that individuals in recovery programs have identified relationships with people including the interpersonal skills of providers as a significant factor in the provider's ability to communicate, emphasize, and connect cross-culturally in a non-judgmental fashion.

This research advances the literature by highlighting the struggles, challenges, processes, rewards, and epiphanies associated with the early acquisition and emerging practice of cultural competence. This information provides for example valuable insight regarding the development of pedagogy for use in practicum or internship programs. This study also demonstrates the utility of the CCDM as an interpretive tool.

Finally, participants have expressed an important element in the developmental process of the traits, characteristics and attributes that identify a culturally competent counselor; the ability of counselor educators' supervisors to create a comfortable, flexible, safe, nurturing, but challenging learning environment whereby students can explore and connect theoretical awareness to effective practical application. Therefore, helping students connect theory into praxis.

Limitations of Study

The findings from this investigation are not generalizable to a larger population sample, but are to be generalized to the underlying theories of multicultural counseling competency. Any generalizability to other cases or sites must be made by the readers in their estimation of the translatability of the circumstances of this research to circumstances or situations they have encountered (Kvale, 1994). An effort was made to balance

participation from students varying genders, ethnic/racial identities, sexual orientations.

The sample of participants is not a full representation of gender, or racial/ethnic identities, but it does incorporate ethnic/racial diversity of participants and provides a participant sample that is balanced across sexual orientation within the counselor education program.

Furthermore, I did not measure classroom interactions or observe classes described by participants. What they say about these interactions are based upon their experiences of these interactions and are treated as such. There is currently no identified level of competency for student opinions pertaining to the program on the CCDM. Therefore, a level of competency was not identified.

Implications for Future Research

I suggest future research is needed investigating the specific challenges, difficulties or rewards associated with delivery of services to diverse clients in naturalistic settings.

Future research should also include studies on the effects of training naturalistic setting and the complex skill development needed to engage diverse clients; and the strategies or techniques student develop and utilize to increase effect size. Future research should also include further development of the CCDM. For example, student opinions and perceptions of the program could be included as a domain.

APPENDIX A
PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS FORM

Participant first and last name; _____.

Gender identification; _____.

Date of birth; _____.

Cultural/Ethnic identification; _____.

Religious/Spiritual affiliation; _____.

Disabilities; Briefly describe any disabilities _____.

Are you currently employed? Y__ N__ If yes please describe type of employment
_____.

Please, briefly describe your course of study and academic interest.
_____.

Do you have any previous cultural competence training? Y__N__ If yes please explain
_____.

What are your attitudes and beliefs concerning counseling diverse clients?
Briefly explain _____.

Why would you like to participate in this study? Briefly explain. _____.

Are you willing to participate in this study? Y__ N__.

APPENDIX B

DEMOGRAPHICS DATA

Name	Jean	Helen	Laura
Age this year (2011)	23	38	31
Gender	Female	Female	Female
Ethnic/ Culture	Biracial (Caucasian/ Ireland/ Hispanic)	White (German/ Bohemian/ Welsh)	White
Disabilities	Visual Impairment	None	None
Employment	Yes (City of Las Vegas Recreation)	None	None
Degree in Pursuit	Masters in School Counseling	Masters in Community Mental Health	Masters in Clinical Mental Health
Previous Cultural Competence Training	Yes (Briefly with the city)	Yes (College)	None
Religious Affiliation	Catholic	Lutheran	None

APPENDIX C

INFORMED CONSENT

Department of Educational Psychology

TITLE OF STUDY: The Acquisition of Cultural Competence: A Phenomenological Inquiry Highlighting the Processes, Challenges and Triumphs of Counselor Education Graduate Students

INVESTIGATOR(S): Douglas L Garner M Ed., and Dr. Paul Jones._

CONTACT PHONE NUMBER (702) 399-0448

Purpose of the Study

You are invited to participate in a research study. The purpose of this study is to study the way Masters-level counselor education students narrate the challenges, problems, triumphs and epiphanies associated with initial attempts to practice the delivery of culturally competent services.

Participants

You are being asked to participate in the study because you fit the criteria: Masters-level Counselor Education students.

Procedures

If you volunteer to participate in this study, you will be asked to do the following: Each participant will be interviewed a total of four times: At the beginning of fall semester, end of fall semester, beginning of spring semester, and near the end of spring semester. At the end of the study each participant will be asked to come together and take part in one 60 minute focus group facilitated by the researcher. Students will be asked to complete a demographics questionnaire which will include:

- 1) Age
- 2) Ethnicity
- 3) Religious/Spiritual affiliation
- 4) Gender identification
- 5) Do you have any cultural competence training?

Interview questions will include:

- 1) Please discuss your academic interests.
- 2) Please describe how these interests develop.
- 3) Please describe how your life experiences play a role in developing these interests.
- 4) Please describe your feelings concerning counseling diverse clients.

Benefits of Participation

There may be no direct benefits to you as a participant in this study. However, we hope to learn how participants engage challenges during the development of cultural competence.

Risks of Participation

There are risks involved in all research studies. This study may include only minimal risks. Some participants may experience some discomfort during the interview or focus group process.

Cost /Compensation

There will no financial cost to you to participate in this study. The study will take 6-8 hours of your time for the year-long study. You will not be compensated for your time.

Contact Information

If you have any questions or concerns about the study, you may contact 702-895-5994 at . For questions regarding the rights of research subjects, any complaints or comments regarding the manner in which the study is being conducted you may contact **the UNLV Office of Research Integrity – Human Subjects at 702-895-2794 or toll free at 877-895-2794 or via email at IRB@unlv.edu.**

Voluntary Participation

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate in this study or in any part of this study. You may withdraw at any time without prejudice to your relations with the university. You are encouraged to ask questions about this study at the beginning or any time during the research study.

Confidentiality

All information gathered in this study will be kept completely confidential. No reference will be made in written or oral materials that could link you to this study. All records will be stored in a locked facility at UNLV for 3 years after completion of the study. After the storage time the information gathered will be destroyed in a secure fashion.

Participant Consent:

I have read the above information and agree to participate in this study. I am at least 18 years of age. A copy of this form has been given to me.

Signature of Participant

Date

Participant Name (Please Print)

Signature of Participant allowing audio/video taping

Date

Participant Note: Please do not sign this document if the Approval Stamp is missing or is expired.

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EDUCATION

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Educational Psychology and School Counselor Education, University of Nevada Las Vegas

M.Ed.

Educational Psychology in School Counseling, University of Nevada Las Vegas

Post B.S. Certificate

Teacher Education Program, California State University Hayward

B.S.

Kinesiology, California State University Hayward

PROFESSIONAL HISTORY

Instructor

University of Nevada Las Vegas (2007- Present); Graduate and Undergraduate Levels. Ethical & Legal Issues in Counseling, Social/Justice Advocacy Multicultural Issues in Counseling, Field Experience in Human Services II, Introduction to Group Counseling (2005-2010).

Instructor

Clark County School District History, (Jeffrey Behavior Center); Licensed Counselor, State of Nevada; U.S. Government, World and U.S., Health Sciences, CPR/AED Instructor, Group Therapy facilitator Communities in Schools Program. (2011).

Instructor

Sierra Nevada College; (Adjunct) Understanding Practical Advocacy (Fall, 2010).

School Counselor and Teacher

Clark County School District (Jeffrey Behavior Center); U.S. Government, Health Sciences, Physical Education, Facilitator, Student Assistance Program, Prevention Strategist Safe and Drug Free Schools, CPR/AED Instructor (2004-2002).

Teacher

Clark County School District (Summit View Correctional Center), Health Sciences, Physical Education, CPR/AED, Instructor, Adult Education Program, Prevention Strategist, Safe and Drug Free School (2001-1998).

Teacher

Von Tobel Middle School, Facilitator Peer Mediation Program, Adult Education Program, Prevention Strategist, Safe and Drug Free School, Speakers Cadre, United States Olympic Committee (1996-1998).

Teacher

Ronzone Elementary School, Health Sciences/Physical Education Prevention Strategist, Safe and Drug Free School. (1996-1995).

Teacher

O'Callahan Middle School, Health Sciences/Physical Education, Prevention Strategist, Safe and Drug Free School. (1994-1992).

Teacher

Health Sciences, Clark High School. (1991-1979).

Publications

Wakefield, M., **Garner, D. L.**, Pehrsson, D-E. & Tyler, T. (2010) A model for analyzing critical cultural domains in counselor development. Vistas: American Counseling Association.

Garner, D. L., (April, 2007). Cultural competency: A challenging mosaic, Counseling Today.

Presentations

Dempsey, K., Butler, K., Vereen, L., Ingram, M., Brown, A., & **Garner, D.** (2011). Something for the Brothers: Black men coping in counselor education. Association for Counselor Education and Supervision, Nashville, TN.

Anekstein, A., **Garner, D.**, (2011). Helping the leaders shape the future: Examining the use of the discrimination model and Sandtray therapy in supervision. Nashville, TN.

- Wakefield, M., Harris, K., Pehrsson, D. E., & Cook, J., & Garner, D., (2011). Mentoring of Our Underrepresented Leaders: What We Know, What We Do, What We Need to Do. Nashville, TN.
- Wakefield, M., **Garner, D.L.**, Harris, L. & Pehrsson, D-E. (2011). Examining ethnic representations in the media over time to teach multicultural competency in our counselor education programs. American Counseling Association, New Orleans, LA.
- Wakefield, M., **Garner, D. L.**, Tyler, T. & Pehrsson, D-E. (2011). Applying the Critical Cultural Domain Model: Helping students understand why history matters in the media. American Counseling Association, New Orleans, LA. (Submitted).
- Wakefield, M., **Garner, D. L.**, Harris, K. & Pehrsson, D-E (November, 2010). Research in mentorship: What matters from a multicultural perspective. Western Association for Counselor Education & Supervision, Sacramento California.
- Anekson, A., **Garner, D. L.**, Astramovich, R. L., Hoskins, W. & Terry, J. (2010). Sandtray in supervision: examining the use of the discrimination model & sandtray therapy within practicum level supervision. Western Association for Counselor Education & Supervision, Sacramento California.
- Garner, D. L.**, Wakefield, W. (February, 2010). A model for analyzing critical cultural domains for professional growth in a global society, American Association of Behavioral and Social Sciences, Las Vegas Nevada.
- Anekstein, A., **Garner, D. L.**, Pehrsson, D-E. (January, 2010). A school counselor's basic guide to learning about sandtray and applying it to work with adolescents, Nevada School Counselors Association, Las Vegas NV.
- Wakefield, M., **Garner, D. L.**, Tyler, & Pehrsson, D-E. (October, 2009). A model for analyzing critical cultural Domains in Counselor Development: Assessing learning across the curriculum, ACES Conference, San Diego California.
- Garner, D. L.**, Wakefield, M., Pehrsson, D-E. & Cross, W. (2009). A model for analyzing critical cultural domains in counselor development: Assessing learning across the curriculum, International Counseling Association, Malaysia. (Submitted, conference cancelled).
- Tyler, T., Wakefield, M., **Garner, D. L.** & Pehrsson, D-E., (2009). Unity in diversity-multicultural competencies for counselors, California Counseling Association.
- Garner, D. L.**, (2009). One Drop Rule: A analysis of citizenship as it relates to race. University of Nevada Las Vegas. (Guest lecturer).

Wakefield, M., **Garner, D. L.**, Tyler, T & Pehrsson, D_E. A Model for analyzing critical cultural domains in counselor development: Assessing learning across the curriculum, American Counseling Association, Charleston, VA. (Submitted, not accepted).

Garner, D. L., (January, 2009). Young Men's Conference: Building sturdy bridges in the 21st century, Las Vegas, NV.

Garner, D. L., (November 2008). A model for analyzing critical cultural domains in counselor development: Assessing learning across the curriculum, American Counselor Association Conference, Palm Springs California.

Hoskins, W., Astramovich, R. L., Pehrsson, D-E., **Garner, D. L.** & Oseguera, A. (2008). The emergence of counseling globally .Western Association of Counselor Education & Supervision.

Garner, D. L. (March, 2008). Emotional Literacy: Implication to learning, relationships, decision making, health & well being. The 6th Annual Celebration for Women, West Las Vegas Library, Las Vegas, NV.

Garner, D. L. (November, 2007). At what Cost? The use of performance enhancing drugs. Presentation to Student Athletes University of Nevada Las Vegas.

Markos, P., Astramovich, R. L., Hoskins, W. & **Garner, D. L.** (July, 2007). Play or supervision? using sandtray with beginning practicum students. IAC Conference, University of College Cork, Cork Ireland.

Garner, D. L. (August, 2007). Emotional intelligence: implications for at-risk students. Teacher In-service to staff of Jeffrey Behavior Center, N. Las Vegas, NV.

Harris, K., **Garner, D. L.**, Smith, S. (November 2006) Black psychology: Implications for counselor education, WACES Conference, Las Vegas NV.

Proposals

ACES Research Grand Award Title of Research: The early acquisition of cultural competence: A phenomenological inquiry highlighting the processes challenges and triumphs of counselor education graduate students (Fall, 2010) submitted.

Student narratives on the acquisition and practice of cultural competency: A phenomenological inquiry of counselor education students (2009), Dissertation Proposal University of Nevada Las Vegas.

Professional Leadership

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Awards

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