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# QUEERING COUNSELOR EDUCATION

Queering Counselor Education: Situational Analysis of LGBTQ+ Competent Faculty

by

Jennifer M. Gess

A dissertation

submitted in partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy in the Department of Counseling

Idaho State University

Spring 2016

# QUEERING COUNSELOR EDUCATION

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## QUEERING COUNSELOR EDUCATION

To the Graduate Faculty:

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July 13, 2015

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Sincerely,

Ralph Baergen, PhD, MPH, CIP  
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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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### Glossary

**ADVOCATE:** A person who actively works to end intolerance, educate others, and support social equity for a group.

**AFFECTIONAL ORIENTATION:** The direction (sex, gender identity/expression(s)) an individual is predisposed to bond with and share affection emotionally, physically, spiritually, and/or mentally. The intentional use of affectional orientation over the use of the term sexual orientation seeks to highlight the multiple layers of relationships (emotional, physical, spiritual, and mental) and deemphasize “sexual” behavior as the sole means of understanding identity.

**ALLY:** Generally refers to a straight person who supports queer people.

**BINARY GENDER:** A traditional view of gender, limiting possibilities to “man” and woman.”

**BIPHOBIA:** Aversion toward bisexuality and bisexual people.

**CISGENDER:** A description for a person whose gender identity, gender expression, and biological sex all align according to traditional societal beliefs (e.g., man, masculine, and male; or woman, feminine, and female).

**DEMISEXUAL:** Attraction to others based on emotional bond.

**GENDER EXPRESSION:** External characteristics and behaviors that are socially defined on the spectrum of masculine to feminine, including dress, mannerisms, and social interactions.

**GENDER IDENTITY:** A person’s innate, psychological identification on the spectrum of woman and man, or other gender.

**GENDER NON-CONFORMING:** An individual who does not match traditional societal beliefs of masculine or feminine gender norms.

**HETERNORMATIVITY:** The belief people fall into distinct binary gender roles (man and woman) with expectations, demands, and constraints of heterosexuality as “normal.”

**HETEROSEXISM:** Behavior that grants preferential treatment to heterosexual people, reinforces the idea heterosexuality is better or more “right” than queerness, or ignores/doesn’t address queerness as existing.

**HOMOPHOBIA:** Fear, anger, intolerance, resentment, or discomfort with LGBTQ+ people.

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**LGBTQ+:** Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, ally, and other sexualities and gender identities.

**MICROAGGRESSIONS:** Verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights and insults, whether intentional or unintentional, which communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to target people based upon their marginalized identity.

**MINORITY STRESS:** The internalized strain a marginalized individual experiences based on the dominant values within society.

**OUT:** When someone shares their affectional orientation and/or gender identity to an individual or group.

**QUEER:** Historically, this was a derogatory slang term used to identify LGBTQ+ people. The term has now been embraced and reclaimed by many LGBTQ+ communities as a symbol of pride, representing all individuals who fall out of the gender and sexuality “norms.”

**SEXUAL ORIENTATION:** The type of sexual, romantic, physical, and/or spiritual attraction one feels for others, often labeled based on the gender relationship between the person and the people to whom they are attracted.

**TRANSGENDER:** An umbrella term used to describe all people who are not cisgender. Describes those whose gender identity or expression does not align, according to traditional societal beliefs, with assigned biological sex.

**TRANSPHOBIA:** Aversion toward transgender people.

# QUEERING COUNSELOR EDUCATION

## Abstract

Counselors must be competent in working with lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, questioning and allied (LGBTQ+) clients as required by the ACA Code of Ethics and the Association of LGBT Issues in Counseling (ALGBTIC) (Walker & Prince, 2010). Graduate counseling programs teach students to become counselors, yet research demonstrates counselor educators often lack skills and knowledge to train counselors to become LGBTQ+ competent (Israel & Hackett, 2004; Logan & Barret, 2005). This study explores the process of counselor educators integrating LGBTQ+ competencies into counseling programs as well as the process of LGBTQ+ competent faculty becoming LGBTQ+ competent using Charmaz's (2014) grounded theory and Clarke's (2005) situational analysis methods. Within this study, themes form the LGBTQ+ Competent Project Map demonstrating the process of counselor educators integrating LGBTQ+ competencies in counseling programs and the process of LGBTQ+ competent faculty becoming LGBTQ+ competent.

## Chapter I

### Introduction and Conceptual Framework

Infusing education for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and other sexualities and gender identities (LGBTQ+) competence throughout counselor training and supervision is a significant process for counselor educators. Professional and ethical guidelines set by the American Counseling Association (ACA) requires LGBTQ+ competence to be infused throughout counseling programs (ACA, 2014; ALGBTIC, 2010; ALGBTIC, 2013; CACREP, 2013). The paucity of research that does address the educational process of LGBTQ+ affirmative faculty members has been limited, narrow in focus, and has not directly addressed counselor education (Graham, 2009; Israel & Hackett, 2004; Matthews, 2005; Rock, Carlson, & McGeorge, 2009; Whitman & Bidell, 2014). The purpose of this study is to contribute to the current knowledge base about implementing education for LGBTQ+ competence into counseling programs from the perspective of LGBTQ+ affirmative counselor educators.

As suggested by Maxwell (2013), a key component of qualitative research is “the system of concepts, assumptions, expectations, beliefs, and theories that supports and informs [the] research” (p. 39). In this study, grounded theory and situational analysis will be used to explore the process of LGBTQ+ affirmative counseling faculty through the lens of queer theory. The conceptual framework incorporates key factors and concepts from existing literature and experiential knowledge related to this research (Maxwell, 2013; Deschamps, 2006). The conceptual framework includes the purpose of this study, the history of oppression and discrimination experienced by LGBTQ+ communities, ethical importance of LGBTQ+ competence in counselor education, and

current scholarly literature on infusing education for LGBTQ+ competence. The conceptual framework provides a foundation for research, including the researcher's philosophical stance regarding research (Creswell, 2013). Various maps of rich descriptions based on the qualitative data from LGBTQ+ affirmative counseling faculty members will emerge, describing the process of implementing LGBTQ+ competencies throughout counseling programs.

LGBTQ+ competence is a focus of this study. The language used to describe the population of interest is based on the research cited. There are multiple acronyms used throughout the literature and multiple acronyms used in this study based upon individual citations. For example, some studies only refer to lesbian, gay, and bisexual (LGB) individuals while others refer to lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) individuals. In general, the researcher's focus is on all sexualities, gender identities, and gender expressions, thus the acronym LGBTQ+ is used when not referring to a specific source.

### **Oppression and Discrimination**

The LGBTQ+ community has endured oppression and discrimination on a daily basis due to heterosexism, transphobia, heteronormativity, and social injustices (Eubanks-Carter, Burckell, & Goldfried, 2005; Hatzenbuehler, McLaughlin, Keyes, & Hasin, 2010; Hein & Scharer, 2013; Levitt et al, 2009; Nagoshi, Adams, Terrell, Hill, Brzuzy, & Nagoshi, 2008; Walker and Prince, 2010). LGBTQ+ persons have additional social stressors compared to their heterosexual and cisgender peers, such as discrimination, prejudice, rejection, stigmatization, and violence (Israel, Gorcheva, Burnes, & Walther, 2008; Meyer, 2003). Cisgender refers to those whose gender identity matches the gender

they were assigned at birth. For example, if a baby is born with female genitalia and self-identifies as a girl (and later, a woman), then she is considered cisgender. Conversely, if a baby is born with female genitalia and identifies as a boy (and later, a man), then he is considered transgender.

Many non-cisgender and non-heterosexual, or LGBTQ+, people experience discrimination throughout their lives. Approximately 17.9% of hate crimes are motivated by the victim's sexual orientation (Institute of Health, 2011). Additionally, 80% of transgender and gender nonconforming people have experienced discrimination and 41% of transgender individuals have considered suicide (Haas, Rodgers, & Herman, 2014). Approximately 70% of LGBTQ+ youth hear anti-LGBTQ+ comments at school (Kosciw, Bartkiewicz, & Greytak, 2012). LGBTQ+ people face homophobia and transphobia in their everyday lives. For example, 52% of the LGBTQ+ population lives in states that do not prohibit employment discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity ("Non-discrimination laws," 2015; Pew Research Center, 2013). These experiences of heterosexism, transphobia, heteronormativity, and other social injustices lead to increased rates of mental health problems, including higher rates of depression, anxiety, substance abuse, and suicidality (Israel, Gorcheva, Burnes, & Walther, 2008).

Along with societal and institutional norms, the mental health community also has a history of pathologizing LGBTQ+ people through diagnoses within the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM; American Psychiatric Association [APA], 1952, 1968, 1980, 1987, 1994, 2000, 2013). Homosexuality was defined as a mental health disorder in the *DSM* until 1973, specifically, a sociopathic personality disturbance (Toscano & Maynard, 2014; Whitman & Bidell, 2014). Mental health treatment for

LGBTQ+ individuals focused on changing clients to become heterosexual and cisgender, known as reparative or conversion therapy, still exists (Whitman & Bidell, 2014). While sexual orientation is still a controversial topic to some, the removal of homosexuality as a mental disorder demonstrates enlightenment in the social sciences, medical community, and the dominant culture (Toscano & Maynard, 2014). Further, the *ACA Governing Council* passed a resolution in 1998 opposing the portrayal of LGB people as mentally ill (Whitman & Bidell, 2014). The current *DSM-5* (2013) defines gender dysphoria as a condition for people whose gender identity does not align with the gender assigned to them at birth, which includes transgender people (Carroll & Gilroy, 2002; Lev, 2013; O'Hara, Dispenza, Brack, & Blood, 2013; Raj, 2002; Toscano & Maynard, 2014). Similar to the debate regarding homosexuality as a mental disorder, controversy regarding gender dysphoria as a disorder populates literature (Toscano & Maynard, 2014). Specifically, gender dysphoria continues to pathologize transgender and gender nonconforming individuals by including social biases in the *DSM-5* criteria, such as “in boys... simulating female attire; or in girls... only wearing typical masculine clothing” (APA, 2013, p. 452). The *DSM-5* (2013) highlights the power the mental health community has when working with LGBTQ+ people.

The consistent heterosexist, transphobic, heteronormative social injustices LGBTQ+ people experience contributes to devastating, negative outcomes, including psychological and emotional difficulties, substance abuse, homelessness, and suicide (Baker & Garcia, 2012). LGBTQ+ people experience depression, anxiety, eating disorders, substance abuse, and suicidality at a higher rate than heterosexual and cisgender people (Israel, Gorcheva, Burnes, & Walther, 2008). LGBTQ+ clients are



overrepresented within counseling settings due to increased mental health difficulties (Sherry, Whilde, & Patton, 2005). Previous literature indicates LGB people are five times more likely to seek counseling than the heterosexual and cisgender majority, further emphasizing the importance for counselors to be LGBTQ+ competent (Alderson, 2004; Dillon, Worthington, Savoy, Rooney, Becker-Schutte, & Guerra, 2004; Grella, Greenwell, Mays, & Cochran, 2009; Matthews, 2005; Palma & Stanley, 2002). The vast majority of counselors will work with LGBTQ+ clients during their careers (Cannon, Wiggins, Poulsen, & Estrada, 2012). The LGBTQ+ community has higher risk factors than heterosexual and cisgender people leading to increased importance for competent and affirmative counseling services.

### **Competency**

As LGBTQ+ communities have endured much oppression and discrimination, including within the mental health community, competent care is imperative. The importance of LGBTQ+ competent and affirmative counseling, based on the adoption of competency frameworks (ALGBTIC, 2010; ALGBTIC, 2013), the development of various competency assessments (Bidell, 2005), and professional articles related to competency, is clearly noted within the literature (Rutter, Estrada, Ferguson, & Diggs, 2008). Clients who receive LGBTQ+ competent and affirmative care have more successful outcomes (Rutter, Estrada, Ferguson, & Diggs, 2008). Definitions for LGBTQ+ competency vary based on the counselor and counselor educator. Competency may be subjective as evidenced by the various definitions and models of counselor competency (ALGBTIC, 2010; ALGBTIC, 2013; Bidell, 2005; Rutter et al., 2008; Sue et al., 1982). According to Rutter, Estrada, Ferguson, and Diggs (2008), a “culturally

competent counselor understands a person's cultural identity" (p. 110). Cultural identity may include race, ethnicity, gender, sexual or affectional orientation, socioeconomic status, physical ability, religion, and age (Kocarek & Pelling, 2003; Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis, 1992). Affectional orientation refers to the intimate bond an individual is predisposed to share emotionally, physically, spiritually, and/or mentally. The intentional use of affectional orientation over the use of the term sexual orientation seeks to highlight the multiple layers of relationships (emotional, physical, spiritual, and mental) and deemphasize "sexual" behavior as the sole means of understanding identity. Due to the vagueness and popularity of the term "competent," participants in this study will be self-identified LGBTQ+ competent counselor educators and will further expand upon their interpretation of LGBTQ+ competency within counselor education.

The importance of multicultural counseling competence began influencing the counseling profession as changing demographics in society became increasingly evident following the Civil Rights movement (Tate, Rivera, & Edwards, 2015). Developed in 1992 by Sue, Arredondo, and McDavis, the Multicultural Counselor Competency Scale (MCCS) guided the multicultural counseling movement. Adding to the importance of the MCCS, high multicultural competence has been shown to increase positive counseling outcomes (Fuertes & Brobst, 2002; Fuertes, et al., 2006). The MCCS measures counselor's self-perception of counselor multicultural competency based on attitudes, knowledge and skills. The multicultural counseling movement changed the counseling field by acknowledging cultural differences of clients (Ponterotto, 2010).

Researchers continue to refer to the MCCS as a building block for further self-report inventories (Bidell, 2005; Israel & Selvidge, 2002). Israel and Selvidge (2002)

recognized the importance of utilizing the MCCS framework to assess counselor competency in working with LGB clients and developed a social desirability scale by combining the MCCS with LGB affirmative counseling. Bidell (2005) created the *Sexual Orientation Counselor Competency Scale* (SOCCS) replicating the MCCS framework of attitude, knowledge, and skills. The SOCCS measures self-reported counselor competency when working with sexual orientation to provide “ethical, affirmative, and competent services to lesbian, gay, and bisexual clients” (Bidell, 2005, p. 268).

Other examples of competency assessments include the *Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Affirmative Counseling Self-Efficacy Inventory* (Dillon & Worthington, 2003), the *Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Working Alliance Self-Efficacy Scale* (Burkard, Pruitt, Medler, & Stark-Booth, 2009), and the *Gender Identity Counselor Competency Scale* (O’Hara, Dispenza, Brack & Blood, 2013). These scales provide further depth and specificity for the definition of counselor competency regarding specific multicultural clients by counselors’ self-reporting competence using a Likert likert scale inventory. The subjective nature of the term “competency” leads to a call for greater understanding of the commonly used term.

The *Association of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Issues in Counseling* (ALGBTIC) is a division of ACA that promotes awareness and understanding of LGBTQ+ topics. In 1997, ALGBTIC, then known as the *Association of Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Issues in Counseling* (ALGBIC), created a set of competencies for working with LGB people in a counseling setting (ALGBIC, 1997). These competenciescompetences were then updated and separated into two documents in 2009 and 2013. In 2009, ALGBTIC published the *ALGBTIC Competencies for Counseling*

*with Transgender Clients* to provide guidelines for counselors working with transgender clients (ALGBTIC). Four years later, the *ALGBTIC Competencies for Counseling with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Queer, Questioning, Intersex, and Ally Individuals* was published (ALGBTIC, 2013). The ALGBTIC competencies provide an in-depth, detailed, strengths-based, affirmative framework for counselors, counseling students, and counselor educators to utilize. The competencies present guidelines for developing and maintaining safe and supporting counseling relationships with LGBTQ+ individuals. While the competencies provide a detailed framework, a single, broad definition of “LGBTQ+ competency” is not addressed.

Furthermore, the term affirmative counseling is often used interchangeably with competency when referring to counseling LGBTQ+ clients. Similar to LGBTQ+ competent counseling, affirmative counseling can be described as best practice with LGBTQ+ clients (Whitman & Bidell, 2014). Another definition distinguishes LGBTQ+ competent and affirmative counseling while describing the difference as being related to the difference between aspirational and mandatory ethics. LGBTQ+ competent counseling represents a higher level of ability (aspirational ethics) and LGBTQ+ affirmation represents the minimal expectations of counselors in their work with gender and sexually diverse clients (mandatory ethics) (ALGBTIC, 2013). Bieschke and Matthews (1996) presented one of the first definitions of affirmative counseling as a step beyond merely accepting LGBTQ+ people but demonstrating the value of LGBTQ+ clients. Smith, Shin, and Officer (2012) view affirmative counseling occurring when the counselor is a member of the dominant group who has power over the marginalized group, specifically LGBTQ+ people, and are supportive of their growth and development.

Bidell and Whitman (2014) define affirmative counseling as viewing sexuality as normal and healthy thus creating a supportive environment. While similar to LGBTQ+ competent counseling, affirmative counseling is considered by ALGBTIC to be a step towards becoming a competent counselor (ALGBTIC, 2013).

Another term that has been used in similar context to “competent” and “affirmative” is *exemplary* (Israel, Gorcheva, Burnes, & Walther, 2008). Exemplary here refers to helpful LGBTQ+ counseling practices, specifically validating and normalizing the client’s identity, maintaining a positive and respectful attitude, and being warm, caring, and listening attentively (Israel et al., 2008). Participants in this study will be asked to define competent and affirmative counseling to further understand how these terms may be similar and disparate. Within this study, the term “competent” will be used most frequently in alignment with the increased prevalence of “competence” in recent articles (ALGBTIC, 2010; ALGBTIC, 2013).

Despite the lack of clear consensus regarding what constitutes competent, affirmative, and exemplary LGBTQ+ counseling, there is agreement regarding the prevalence of counselors lacking LGBTQ+ competence (Phillips & Fischer, 1998; Walker & Prince, 2010). Ignorance and prejudice regarding LGBTQ+ topics impede counseling sessions (Pearson, 2003). Israel, Gorcheva, Burnes, and Walther (2008) found some counselors still view homosexuality as a disorder, hold heteronormative bias, and use a heterosexual framework when counseling LGBTQ+ clients. This may lead to client harm, in opposition to ethical counseling (ACA, 2014). Phillips and Fischer (1998) studied 108 counseling psychology students and found the majority feel incompetent to work with LGB clients. Doherty and Simmons (1996) surveyed marriage and family

therapists and found the majority of participants did not feel competent to work with LGB clients.

Furthermore, many LGBTQ+ clients report dissatisfaction with the counseling experience (Grove, 2009; Liddle, 1996; O'Neill, 2002; Palma & Stanley, 2002). While approximately 88% of counselors will work with LGB clients and encounter at least one transgender client in their career, counselors may unintentionally project homophobia and transphobia in session, which increases internalized homophobia and transphobia in clients (Carroll & Gilroy, 2001; Graham, Carney & Kluck, 2012; Pearson, 2004). Internalized homophobia is when LGB individuals “believe they are indeed deserving of ill treatment because of their identity” (ALGBTIC, 2011, p. 43). Similarly, internalized transphobia is when transgender and gender nonconforming individuals believe they warrant oppressive treatment (ALGBTIC, 2011). It is imperative to note a paucity of research exists addressing bisexual and transgender counseling competence (Keppel, 2006; Walker & Prince, 2010). Bisexual and transgender clients have often been neglected within research in counselor education (Brooks & Inman, 2013; Carroll & Gilroy, 2002; O'Hara, Dispenza, Brack, & Blood, 2013; Phillips, Ingram, Smith, & Mindes, 2003). There is an overall lack of knowledge, skills and awareness regarding LGBTQ+ people among counselors and counselor educators.

The lack of competent LGBTQ+ counselors may be due to the lack of LGBTQ+ competent counselor training (Alderson, 2003; Biaggio, Orchard, Larson, Petrino, & Mihara, 2003; Croteau, Bieschke, Phillips, & Lark, 1998; Rutter, Estrada, Ferguson, & Diggs, 2008). Many counselor educators lack competency to teach LGBTQ+ affirmative counseling (Alderson, 2003; Biaggio, Orchard, Larson, Petrino, & Mihara, 2003; Cannon,

Wiggins, Poulsen, & Estrada, 2012; Croteau, Bieschke, Phillips, & Lark, 1998; Israel & Hackett, 2004; Pilkington & Cantor, 1996; Rutter, Estrada, Ferguson, & Diggs, 2008; Sherry, Whilde, & Patton, 2005), and, according to Pilkington and Cantor (1996), some psychology professors verbalize antigay statements. According to a study of 104 counseling and clinical psychology doctoral programs, only 17% of these programs incorporated LGB topics in evaluations for students and 21% of the programs integrated LGB topics into non-multicultural counseling courses (Sherry, Whilde, & Patton, 2005). These studies demonstrate the lack of LGB competency training in counseling programs and neglect of transgender and gender nonconforming competency training. Further, literature review indicates heterosexism is prevalent in counseling and psychology textbooks, supervision, course content, and interactions with faculty (Alderson, 2003). Several researchers have called for more LGBTQ+ competency training infused throughout counselor education (Biaggio et al., 2003; Croteau et al., 1998; Rutter, Estrada, Ferguson, & Diggs, 2008; Sherry, Whilde, & Patton, 2005).

### **Ethical Guidelines**

There is an ethical obligation for counselors to be LGBTQ+ competent (Walker & Prince, 2010; Whitman & Bidell, 2014). In 1998, the ACA Governing Council passed a resolution opposing LGB individuals as mentally ill due to their sexual orientation (Whitman & Bidell, 2014; Whitman, Glosoff, Kocet, & Tarvydas, 2013). This resolution followed other helping professional fields, such as psychology and social work, to explicitly state the stance of LGBTQ+ affirmation on behalf of the counseling profession.

The 2014 ACA Code of Ethics outlines the professional values and representative standards of the counseling profession. The ACA Code of Ethics informs the counseling

field of ethical practice and establishes expectations for professional counselors (2014). The ACA Code of Ethics preamble refers to honoring diversity and multiculturalism as well as promoting social justice, and explicit standards refer directly to sexual orientation and gender identity. Specifically, the standard of nondiscrimination in Code of Ethics (2014) states, “Counselors do not condone or engage in discrimination against prospective or current clients... based on... gender identity, [and] sexual orientation” (p. 9). Further, the Code of Ethics (2014) requires multicultural counseling competence, defined as, “Counseling that recognizes diversity and embraces approaches that support the worth, dignity, potential, and uniqueness of individuals within their historical, cultural, economic, political, and psychosocial contexts” (p. 20). The standards of the profession include LGBTQ+ competency, illuminating the necessity of LGBTQ+ training within counselor education to ensure future counselors provide ethical counseling services.

The Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) is the accrediting organization that provides training principles and standards for counselor education programs (Troutman & Packer-Williams, 2014). While CACREP standards do not explicitly state sexual orientation within the 2016 Standards (CACREP, 2013; Troutman & Packer-Williams, 2014), sexual orientation and gender are included via the term *multicultural groups* as defined in the glossary (CACREP, 2009; 2013). The importance of multicultural competence is weaved throughout the CACREP standards, including in the foundation of counselor education programs and infusion within the core classes. This affirms the importance of multicultural competence within counselor education programs, which includes LGBTQ+ affirmative and competent counseling.



Despite ethical requirements by ACA, ALGBTIC, and CACREP for counselors to be competent when working with LGBTQ+ clients and evidence of the high need for LGBTQ+ counseling, counselors are often less than competent to work with LGBTQ+ clients (Liddle, 1996; Palma & Stanley, 2002). Currently, universities may unintentionally promote heterosexism in the university environment and within the classroom, and counseling programs do not train counselors adequately to work with LGBTQ+ clients (Cannon, Wiggins, Poulsen, & Estrada, 2012; Israel & Hackett, 2004). Counseling programs may not address LGBTQ+ competence due to counselor educators' inexperience with LGBTQ+ topics, personal feelings of homophobia, school institutional homophobia, and/or institutional heteronormative perspectives (Cannon, Wiggins, Poulsen, & Estrada, 2012; Logan & Barret, 2005). Given these findings, it is abundantly clear counseling programs must begin training counselors to be LGBTQ+ competent throughout the entire program to reduce further disenfranchising LGBTQ+ and allied individuals (Cannon, Wiggins, Poulsen, & Estrada, 2012; Carroll & Gilroy, 2001).

### **Counselor Education**

While the ACA, Code of Ethics, ALGBTIC, and CACREP require LGBTQ+ competency, counselors continue to graduate from counselor education programs without being LGBTQ+ competent (Alderson, 2004; Cannon, Wiggins, Poulsen, & Estrada, 2012). Counselor identity forms within counseling programs based largely on the influence of counselor educators (Calley & Hawley, 2008; Cannon, Wiggins, Poulsen, & Estrada, 2012; Reiner, Dobmeier, & Hernandez, 2013). Counselor educators are ethically required to teach the LGBTQ+ competencies and LGBTQ+ affirmative counseling (Whitman & Bidel, 2014). Unfortunately, many counselor educators are not adequately

addressing this requirement, often due to the lack of LGBTQ+ competence of counselor educators (Alderson, 2004; Walker & Prince, 2010; Whitman & Bidell, 2014).

According to Miller, Miller, and Stull (2007), counselor educators have higher levels of discrimination and bias towards sexual orientation compared with discrimination and bias towards race. This demonstrates the importance of counselor educators examining personal prejudices towards LGB individuals.

Many counselors-in-training (CITs) attribute the lack of LGBTQ+ training within counseling programs to be the primary contributor to their low level of LGBTQ+ clinical competence and internalized heteronormative perceptions (Bidell, 2013; Cannon, Wiggins, Poulsen, & Estrada, 2012; O'Hara, Dispenza, Brack & Blood, 2013; Pilkington & Cantor, 1996; Rock, Carlson, & McGeorge, 2009). If counselor educators are not LGBTQ+ competent, it may be difficult to teach counselors to be LGBTQ+ competent. Counselor education has the opportunity to train affirmative professional counselors throughout counseling programs, including within the classroom, supervision, scholarship, mentorship, and advocacy (Alderson, 2004; Bidell, 2013). In counselor education, there is limited research regarding LGBTQ+ competence in counselor education programs. The study will contribute to current research by exploring the process of counselor educators infusing LGBTQ+ competence throughout the classroom, supervision, research, mentorship, and advocacy.

**Teaching.** Within the counseling classroom there is a primary opportunity to train CITs to become LGBTQ+ competent professional counselors. Phillips (2000) recommends counselor training, such as in the classroom, be used to help counselors become aware of their own attitudes towards LGB individuals and develop more LGB

affirming attitudes. Classes range from clinical application to academic coursework. Previous literature recommends LGBTQ+ topics be incorporated throughout all counseling classes as well as having specific LGBTQ+ counseling courses (Cannon, Wiggins, Poulsen, & Estrada, 2012). Israel and Hackett (2004) studied outcomes of counselor training focused on providing information about LGB issues and explored attitudes towards LGB individuals. Counselor educators who provide knowledge of LGB individuals and challenge CITs to evaluate their attitudes towards LGB people can significantly increase CITs' awareness of LGB clients (Israel & Hackett, 2004). Despite CACREP (2013) and the ACA Code of Ethics (ACA, 2014) requiring the infusion of multicultural counseling competence throughout counselor education, CITs still often do not feel competent to work with LGBTQ+ clients. Rock, Carlson, and McGeorge (2009) studied 190 CITs within a couple and family specialty, and found 60.5% reported having no education on LGBTQ+ affirmative counseling. Additionally, Bahner (2007) studied clinical psychology programs and found insufficient LGBTQ+ focus in the classroom. Students reported initiating LGBTQ+ topics themselves in order to discuss LGBTQ+ issues (Bahner, 2007).

The ACA Code of Ethics (2014) requires counselor educators to infuse diversity throughout all courses. Research demonstrates infusion increases competence (Carroll & Gilroy, 2002). While there is literature addressing integrating topics of lesbian and gay affirmative counseling activities within the classroom (Kocarek & Pelling, 2003), inclusive LGBTQ+ topics are still not consistently addressed throughout all counseling courses (Cannon, Wiggins, Poulsen, & Estrada, 2012; Carroll & Gilroy, 2001). According to Sherry, While, and Patton (2005), only 21% of the 104 doctoral counseling

and psychology programs studied infuse LGB topics throughout the counseling and psychology classes. Introducing LGBTQ+ topics early on and consistently throughout the counseling program provides opportunities for CITs to reconcile personal value conflicts and is beneficial for counselor development (Biaggio et al., 2005; Frank & Cannon, 2010; Whitman & Bidell, 2014). Recommended activities to infuse this material throughout counseling courses include role-plays, reading LGBTQ+ literature, and providing LGBTQ+ immersion experiences (Alderson, 2004; Burkholder & Dineen, 1996; Cannon, Wiggins, Poulsen, & Estrada, 2012; Dillon, Worthington, Soth-McNett, & Schwartz, 2008; Kocarek & Pelling, 2003; Matthews, 2005).

The previous literature demonstrates that a class specifically focusing on LGBTQ+ topics can be helpful for increasing competence (Bidell, 2013; Dillon, Worthington, Savoy, Rooney, Becker-Schutte, & Guerra, 2004; Ji, Du Bois, & Finnessy, 2009; Matthews, Selvidge, & Fisher, 2005; Perrin, Bhattacharyya, Snipes, Calton, & Heesacker, 2014). Focusing on one class to specifically explore LGBTQ+ topics can provide a space for CITs to explore personal biases, values, and beliefs while increasing knowledge and building skills in a safe setting. LGBTQ+ courses can include a LGBTQ+ speakers' panel where speakers share personal experiences (Perrin, Bhattacharyya, Snipes, Calton, & Heesacker, 2014), discussions on the history of homophobia and transphobia (Athanases & Larrabee, 2003), watching LGBTQ+ movies (Waterman, Reid, Garfield, & Hoy, 2001), and developing action plans combating homophobia and transphobia (Iasenza, 1989). Many of the suggested activities attempt to reduce heterosexism, heteronormativity, and social injustice through increasing awareness of privilege and oppression (Perrin, Bhattacharyya, Snipes, Calton, &

Heesacker, 2014; Whitman & Bidell, 2014). While Bidell (2013) found benefit to an exclusive LGBTQ+ course, Ridley, Espelage, and Rubinstein (1997) caution reducing content to one course as it may increase stereotyped thinking.

A dearth of research exists regarding integrating transgender and gender nonconforming competent counseling practices within the classroom (Carroll & Gilroy, 2002; O'Hara, Dispenza, Brack & Blood, 2013; Sherry, Whilde, & Patton, 2005).

Counselor educators have the opportunity to provide a safe space within the classroom for CITs to explore personal values and beliefs surrounding gender and transgender people, and further develop an affirmative counseling space for transgender and gender nonconforming clients (Carroll & Gilroy, 2002). Counselor educators can raise topics about the historical and sociopolitical contexts that have influenced CITs' personal gender identity and gender expression to increase personal perceptions of their own gender (Carroll & Gilroy, 2002; O'Hara, Dispenza, Brack & Blood, 2013). Counselor educators may also explore the coming out process for LGBTQ+ clients (Ji, Du Bois, & Finessy, 2009).

Queer theory as a theoretical framework for counselor educators to utilize as pedagogical guidance may be beneficial for CITs (Carroll & Gilroy, 2002; Frank & Cannon, 2010). Queer theory challenges power, questions binary systems, and advocates for inclusivity. Further, queer theory contradicts the purpose of categories and explores the restrictions of categories, such as challenging the assumption of heteronormativity and gender as a binary system (Sedgwick, 1990). Heteronormativity and gender as a binary system restricts people into boxes, silences queer people, and limits creativity (Sedgwick, 1990) thus reducing perspectives and wellness. Frank and Cannon (2010)

suggest counselor educators utilize queer theory throughout all courses to highlight the history and strengths of marginalized communities, reflect on current political and social milieu, challenge stereotypes and acknowledge multiple ways of knowing. Carroll and Gilroy (2002) suggest applying queer theory to counselor training by considering power and control in counselor education, challenging the binary system of gender and sexuality while confronting gendered curriculum. Queer theory provides a framework for counselor educators to increase and challenge CITs' learning.

Incorporating LGBTQ+ competence may be difficult due to limited LGBTQ+ competent counselor educators (Alderson, 2004; Walker & Prince, 2010; Whitman & Bidell, 2014). This limitation inherently leads to a lack of LGBTQ+ competent counselors, thereby impacting the quality of mental health resources to a marginalized, at-risk community. In order to fulfill this need and the gap in the literature, the current study will explore how affirmative counselor educators infuse LGBTQ+ competency within the classroom.

**Supervision.** Supervision provides a space for university educators and field supervisors to explore LGBTQ+ competent counseling in a more private setting than the classroom. The Code of Ethics expands upon the ethical responsibilities counselor educators have as supervisors, including competence with multicultural topics (ACA, 2014). The quality of the relationship between the supervisor and supervisee is often the foundation for effective supervision. Different models of affirmative supervision demonstrate various perspectives of LGBTQ+ competent supervision (Pett, 2000). Research demonstrates affirmative supervision models increase feelings of empowerment

by supervisees (Bruss, Brack, Brack Glickauf-Hughes, & O'Leary, 1997; Halpert, Reinhardt, & Toohey, 2007).

The Code of Ethics (ACA, 2014) provides an outline of the ethical obligations university and field supervisors have within the supervisory relationship. Supervisors are required to address multiculturalism and diversity within supervision. In addition, supervisors are ethically mandated to be gatekeepers for the profession through awareness of supervisee limitations and recommendation of dismissal from training programs (ACA, 2014). Gatekeeping is the process of evaluating CITs' competence as ethical counselors and intervening as necessary (Ziomiek-Daigle & Christensen, 2010). Various supervision models exist addressing LGBTQ+ competence, which supervisors can use to address this aspect of multiculturalism and diversity in supervision.

Buhrke's Conflictual Situation Model (Helpert & Pfaller, 2001) explores supervisors' and supervisees' level of homophobia to LGBT-affirmation on a spectrum, highlighting LGBT-affirmative supervisors as most likely to increase affirmation among supervisees. House and Holloway's Supervisee Empowerment Model (1992) focuses on skills, knowledge, and self-efficacy for supervisees working with LGBTQ+ clients. The Affirmative Development Model of Supervision (Bruss et al., 1997) emphasizes three developmental stages tracing supervisees' growth. The first stage focuses on dependency on the supervisor; the second stage is characterized by overly empathizing with the client; and the third stage highlights the balance of the supervisee, supervisor, and the client (Bruss et al., 1997). In 2000, Pett proposed a model of affirmative supervision grounded in (a) acceptance of sexual orientations and gender identities, (b) supervisors' exploration of personal attitudes, beliefs, and feelings regarding LGBTQ+ topics, (c) respect for

supervisees' identity, and (d) awareness of systemic homophobia. Halpert, Reinhardt, and Toohey (2007) define the Integrative Affirmative Supervision Model (IAS) as an inclusive model for all supervisees. The IAS model highlights transference and countertransference, supervisee's values, heterosexism and homophobia, awareness of power, and exploration of cultural context (Halpert, Reinhardt, & Toohey, 2007).

Long and Grote (2012) explored LGBTQ+ supervisors working with LGBTQ+ supervisees, specifically examining factors impacting the supervisory relationship. The first factor is the supervisor's openness about his or her sexuality and/or gender identity. Long and Grote report on the importance for LGBTQ+ supervisors to be "out" to model positive supervision for the supervisee (2012). The second factor acknowledges LGBTQ+ supervisors may not be experts in the evolving field of LGBTQ+ studies. Other factors include awareness of bias and power within the supervisory relationship. The final factor Long and Grote explored was boundaries and the potential for multiple role relationships (2012). Supervisors and counselor educators who exhibit these factors have a strong therapeutic alliance with the supervisee.

Goodrich and Luke (2011) developed the LGBTQ Responsive Model for Supervisors of Group Work (RMSGW) as a framework for group work supervisors to address LGBTQ issues within group settings. Group supervision increases learning between CITs, counselors, and supervisors. The model follows the Bernard's Discrimination Model (Bernard, 1979) which highlights supervisor's roles, including teacher, counselor, and consultant. The role of teacher generally refers to providing knowledge to the supervisee; the role of counselor refers to providing support; and the role of consultant refers to a more egalitarian relationship where the supervisor and



supervisee collaborate on supervision issues (Bernard, 1979). Simultaneously, the RMSGW recognizes various levels of intervention, including intrapersonal, interpersonal, group-as-a-whole, and supra-group. Findings demonstrated the positive impact of supervisee awareness and skills when in a group supervision using the LGBTQ RMSGW (Luke & Goodrich, 2013).

Various models of affirmative supervision exist, yet limited research has been done within counselor education. Specifically, there is no current literature exploring what supervision models LGBTQ+ competent counselor educators' use. This study will address the gap within research regarding the process of counselor educators' supervisory experiences with hopes of increasing CITs' LGBTQ+ competence.

**Scholarship.** A disparity exists between the high percentage of LGBTQ+ people who seek counseling treatment and the limited research on LGBTQ+ affirmative counseling (Singh & Shelton, 2011). Further, the dearth of LGBTQ+ research implies unworthiness of attending to LGBTQ+ individuals (Greene, 2007). Historically, assessing and diagnosing homosexuality was a frequent topic (Toscano & Maynard, 2014). Currently, LGBTQ+ trends within psychology research focus on special topics, such as HIV and sexuality (Toscano & Maynard, 2014). There is a high need for counselor educators to further research topics related to the LGBTQ+ population (Singh & Shelton, 2011). The lack of LGBTQ+ research within counselor education may be impacted by the lack of LGBTQ+ competent counselors and counselor educators, stemming from the limited training of LGBTQ+ competencies (Alderson, 2004; Walker & Prince, 2010). In order to increase LGBTQ+ competence among CITs, counselor educators have the opportunity to provide scholarship on behalf of LGBTQ+

communities through publishing in counseling journals, presenting at counseling conferences, and providing trainings.

One peer-reviewed journal for counselor educators to publish LGBTQ+ specific research and conceptual articles is the Journal of LGBT Issues in Counseling (JLGBTIC), the official journal of ALGBTIC. JLGBTIC published the first issue in 2006 to address the growth and development of LGBTQ+ people to contribute to multicultural research as a whole (Farley, 2006). JLGBTIC publishes manuscripts quarterly related to career, addictions, spirituality, development, testing and assessment within school, mental health, and couple and family counseling (Farley, 2006).

While heterosexism in research has decreased over time and LGB topics are increasing within research (Buhrke, 1992), LGBTQ+ topics are still limited in counseling and counseling psychology journals (Eubanks-Carter, Burckell, & Goldfriend, 2005). A content analysis of counseling psychology journals between 1990 and 1999 found only two percent of articles focused on lesbian, gay, and bisexual topics (Philips, Ingram, Smith, & Mindes, 2003). More recently, Singh and Shelton (2011) utilized content analysis methodology to examine qualitative research between 1998 and 2008 in four counseling and counseling psychology journals, including *Journal of Counseling and Development* (JCD), *Journal of Counseling Psychology* (JCP), JLGBTIC, and *The Counseling Psychologist* (TCP). Although qualitative research has been encouraged within counseling research to study the experiences of marginalized communities (Carter & Morrow, 2007; Yeh & Inman, 2007), the results demonstrate limited qualitative LGBTQ+ research. Between 1998 and 2008, a total of 12 LGBTQ+ qualitative manuscripts were published between the four journals. Specifically, JLGBTIC published

seven manuscripts, JCD published three articles, TCP published two studies, and JCP published none during the mentioned time frame.

Singh and Shelton (2011) provided suggestions for future research, including expanding upon previous qualitative LGBTQ+ research and incorporating diverse qualitative methodologies. Both of these studies demonstrate the lack of LGBTQ+ inclusivity within research. Counselor educators could expand upon the current LGBTQ+ research utilizing qualitative research as qualitative inquiries captures the essence of complex, marginalized experiences without generalizing an entire population (Singh & Shelton, 2011). Specifically, counselor educators could publish within JLGBTIC, JCD, TCP, and JCP to increase visibility of LGBTQ+ scholarship.

Similar to the counseling field, there is limited LGBTQ+ research published in the four major social work journals. A content analysis was conducted to analyze four social work journals, including *Social Work*, *Child Welfare*, *Social Service Review*, and *Families in Society*, from 1988 to 1997 (Van Voorhis & Wagner, 2002), with a follow up study that tracked articles in these journals from 1998 to 2009 (Johnston & Stewart, 2013). The second study indicated a decrease in articles on sexuality from 77 in the first analysis to 50 in the latest content analysis (Johnston & Stewart, 2013). As demonstrated, there is limited LGBTQ+ research in both the social work profession and the counseling field.

LGBTQ+ communities are diverse and include many subset groups with limited research. The research on transgender and gender non-conforming clients, LGB individuals of color, and LGBTQ+ intersectionality is even more limited than research on White lesbian and gay individuals (Singh & Shelton, 2011). The vast range of identities

within LGBTQ+ communities demonstrates the breadth of possibilities for further research to meet the needs of these subset groups. Counselor educators could diminish the gap in research by adding to current literature, and notably by providing research on intersectionality and diverse communities within the LGBTQ+ population.

Conferences, workshops, and trainings are also an aspect of scholarship.

According to Helwif and Schmidt (2011), LGBTQ+ topics were the sixth most popular category of all sessions at the ACA annual conventions between 2001 and 2008, following creative arts, counselor skills, career counseling, other multicultural topics, and spirituality. This demonstrates an increase in interest of LGBTQ+ topics at the annual ACA conference from previous years. LGBTQ+ topics were eighth on the list between 1993 and 2000, and were not shown in the top ten between 1977 and 1992. Counselor educators have the ongoing opportunity to provide workshops at counseling conferences to increase LGBTQ+ competence of CITs, counselors, and counselor educators.

Current scholarship of LGBTQ+ competence is limited within the counseling field, specifically within research and conference presentations. Scholarship, including research, presentations, and trainings, by counselor educators is necessary and needed (Singh & Shelton, 2011). Participants in this study will be asked to discuss the process of counselor educators infusing LGBTQ+ competence into their scholarly activities.

**Mentorship.** Mentoring within counselor education may be defined by a personal relationship in which an experienced counselor educator acts as a “guide, role model, teacher, and sponsor” to a less experienced CITs (Johnson & Nelson, 1999, p. 190). Mentoring may be considered as three types: instrumental, socioemotional support, and networking (Tenenbaum, Crosby, & Gliner, 2001). Instrumental might involve

direct instruction and coaching. Socioemotional support consists of self-disclosure, affirmation, and empathy. Networking includes introducing CITs to other people in the field and supporting the mentee in participation with professional networks. Mentoring is a close relationship between mentor and mentee that often leads to positive development for both contributing parties and may be beneficial for CITs and counselor educators.

Mentoring is often a critical part of development for CITs, doctoral students, and counselor educators. Many graduate programs recognize mentoring as an important developmental building block for CITs (Taylor & Neimeyer, 2009). Taylor and Neimeyer (2009) report mentorship leads to higher levels of socioemotional support, higher research productivity, and higher levels of satisfaction. Additional benefits of mentorship include career and professional development, enhancement of personal and professional identity, and exposure to the counseling field (Warren, 2005). Mentoring at the doctoral level leads to increased production in research, publication, and conference presentations (Johnson, n.d.). Further developments include improved communication skills and increased confidence (Bowman et al., 1990).

Mentors also identify benefits of the mentorship relationship. Mentors report both extrinsic, including greater productivity and assistance with projects, and intrinsic rewards, such as personal satisfaction and validation (Johnson & Nelson, 1999). Grima, Paille, Mejia, and Prud'homme (2014) found mentors often value the personal relationship with the mentee more than the professional rewards. Reddick, Griffin, Cherwitz, Ceerda-Prazak, and Bunch (2012) concluded graduate students benefit as mentors.

Counselor's engaging in personal relationships with LGBTQ+ people, such as friends or family members, have higher rates of LGBTQ+ competence (Lambert, Ventura, Hall, & Cluse-Tolar, 2006). Mentorship with a LGBTQ+ ally mentor can lead to higher competence. For example, Asta and Vacha-Haase (2013) researched 14 pre-doctoral psychology interns and psychologists who developed strong relationships with LGBTQ+ individuals and emerged as LGBTQ+ allies. This leads to the hypothesis that LGBTQ+ competent mentorship in counselor education may increase LGBTQ+ competence of CITs. Currently, there is no research focusing on mentorship regarding LGBTQ+ topics within higher education. The role of mentorship in developing LGBTQ+ competence for CITs will be addressed within this study.

**Advocacy/Service.** Advocacy is a core component to a counselor educator's role (Lewis, Arnold, House, & Toporek, 2002). Due to the historical stigmatization and present discrimination LGBTQ+ people face, addressing LGBTQ+ competency within the classroom, supervision, scholarship, and mentorship is not enough (Kocarek & Pelling, 2003). Faculty members who advocate on behalf of the LGBTQ+ communities have higher LGBTQ+ competence (Singh & Burnes, 2010). Advocacy on behalf of LGBTQ+ people is a vital role as a counselor educator. This may happen at the individual level, within the institution of the university, in the community, or at a larger systemic level.

Advocating at the individual level on behalf of LGBTQ+ communities may manifest in various ways. For example, learning is enhanced when LGBTQ+ inclusivity is present to provide safe, welcoming environments for LGBTQ+ students (Ballard, Bartle, & Masequesmay, 2008). Counselor educators may have the opportunity to

advocate for LGBTQ+ CITs in need of support in order to provide an affirmative atmosphere. This may include using empowerment strategies, such as identifying CITs' strengths, recognizing the impact of contextual factors, and helping CITs' implement a self-advocacy plan (Ratts & Hutchins, 2009). Applying a self-advocacy plan, specifically identifying strengths, identifying social, political, economic, and cultural factors that affect the CIT, and recognizing internalized oppression, may empower the CIT (Lewis, et al., 2003). Counselor educators are able to assist CITs with resources and explore social, political, economic, and cultural factors affecting the CIT (Ratts & Hutchins, 2009).

Advocating on behalf of LGBTQ+ communities within the educational institution may include educating the affiliated department, other departments, at the college level, and within the university higher administration. Examples may include challenging the potential lack of inclusivity of the counselor education department's mission statement, diversity of textbooks and curricula, and LGBTQ+ affirming department media, such as including LGBTQ+ people in brochures, fliers, and on websites (Frank & Cannon, 2010; Pilkington & Cantor, 1996). Advocating at the university level includes challenging the potential lack of inclusivity of the university's mission statement and facilitating Safe Zone trainings for students and faculty. CITs who are taught LGBTQ+ competence through external trainings and workshops, such as Safe Zone workshops, have increased LGBTQ+ competence as professional counselors (Walker & Prince, 2014; Worth, 2011). Further, research suggests didactic and experiential activities, such as within the classroom or a Safe Zone training, increase CITs' LGBTQ+ counselor competence (Dillon & Worthington, 2003; Israel & Hackett, 2004).

Counselor educators advocating at the community level includes providing service on behalf of LGBTQ+ communities. The community may provide opportunities for LGBTQ+ people to find support and affirming environments. Counselor educators can identify needs of the local LGBTQ+ community and provide service to fill the need (Lopez-Baez & Paylo, 2009). For example, counselor educators can alert community and school groups with similar concerns, and utilize interpersonal skills by volunteering at a local LGBTQ+ community center or LGBTQ+ school group (Lopez-Baez & Paylo, 2009). Rankin (2004) conducted a study of LGBTQ+ centers and found communities with these resources have lower incidents of homophobia, thus demonstrating the importance of community advocacy. Counselor educators can volunteer at local LGBTQ+ centers in order to support LGBTQ+ communities, as well as support CIT's service learning projects with LGBTQ+ communities.

Counselor educators have the opportunity to be a LGBTQ+ advocate at the larger systemic level. This type of advocacy calls for a leadership role (Lopez-Baez & Paylo, 2009). Utilizing anti-oppressive strategies as a leader encourages change within multiple systemic environments. One example is being an active member of ALGBTIC, such as serving on a committee or running for a position on the board. Systemic change on behalf of LGBTQ+ communities creates an inclusive, equitable system (Lopez-Baez & Paylo, 2009), and may include advocating politically (Toporek, Lewis, & Crethar, 2009). For example, counselor educators, in their personal lives, have the opportunity to intervene at the policy or legislative level based on LGBTQ+ systemic injustice, mistreatment or neglect (Toporek, Lewis, & Crethar, 2009).



There are many opportunities for counselor educators to provide service on behalf of the LGBTQ+ community through advocacy at the individual, university institution, community, and larger systemic levels. LGBTQ+ advocacy may decrease heterosexism, transphobia, heteronormativity, and social injustices LGBTQ+ communities endure. In order to increase CITs' LGBTQ+ competence and directly connect with LGBTQ+ communities, counselor educators have the opportunity to engage in LGBTQ+ advocacy.

While various studies show there is an ethical obligation for counselors to be LGBTQ+ competent and the counseling profession has given recent attention towards LGBTQ+ competency, there is no clear consensus as to what constitutes a LGBTQ+ competent training program. The literature indicates counselor education faculty need to be LGBTQ+ competent in order to help CITs become LGBTQ+ competent counselors. There is a gap in research regarding faculty members' competence (Bidell, 2013; Carroll & Gilroy, 2002; Dillon, Worthington, Savoy, Rooney, Schutte, & Guerra, 2004; Godfrey, Haddock, Fisher, & Lund, 2006; Graham, Carney, & Kluck, 2011; O'Hara, et al., 2013; Rutter, Estrada, Ferguson, & Diggs, 2008). This study will address the gap in research by exploring the following research question: What is the process for LGBTQ+ affirmative counselor educators who integrate LGBTQ+ competence throughout counselor education? Further, what is the process for LGBTQ+ affirmative counselor educators of becoming LGBTQ+ competent?

### **Epistemology**

As methodology is inevitably interwoven with the researcher's perspective, it is imperative to further examine the epistemology, or theory of knowledge, of the researcher, as qualitative inquiry is impacted by the researcher (Lincoln, Lynham, &

Guba, 2011). As the researcher, my way of seeing the world aligns with queer theory philosophy. Queer theory stems from postmodern, postcolonial ontologies and beliefs, and includes viewing knowledge as fabricated and constructed (Carroll & Gilroy, 2001; Wilchins, 2004). Queer theory challenges the deep roots of heterosexual hierarchy and interrupts the colonization of heteronormativity that may dominate academia (Smith, 2015). Queer theory questions positions of power, challenges the limitations of language, considers sociocultural influences, and deconstructs norms (Frank, 2004). Queer theory focuses on the intersectionality of gender, sex, race, class, the environment, and power (Crabtree, Sapp, & Licona, 2009). As a philosophy, queer theory acknowledges the importance of experience and historical implication while recognizing the construction and cultural impacts of knowledge. Queer theory seeks to eradicate power and challenges the politics of domination (Lather, 1991). Queer theory focuses on providing voice to those who have been silenced (Foucault, 1991; Pinar, 2009; Wilchins, 2004). This theory also aligns with the current research focused on LGBTQ+ competence within counselor education given many LGBTQ+ voices are marginalized, dismissed, and silenced (Foucault, 1991; Pinar, 2009; Wilchins, 2004). Foucault, one of the founders of queer theory, recognized the relationship between power and knowledge, and how those who claim knowledge occupy the power to shape knowledge (Foucault, 1991). As LGBTQ+ voices have been silenced and illegitimatized, awareness of the relationship between power and knowledge gains importance.

In my approach to qualitative research, I am informed by my philosophical position, which aligns with the methodologies for this study, specifically grounded theory and situational analysis. Grounded theory stems from postmodern philosophy while

situational analysis is rooted in the philosophy of queer theory. My personal philosophy and my topic of research are founded in queer theory, which provides a foundation to the research. My epistemology relates to my personal experience because it is how I experience the world.

### **Situating the Researcher**

As the researcher, I am interested in the topic of inquiry based on my personal history, how I currently view the world, and ethical and political issues (Creswell, 2013). My philosophy guides my research by shaping how I formulate the research question and research process. Charmaz (2014) and Clarke (2005) recommend researchers embrace personal experiences with qualitative research. Understanding my perspective is key to exploring the foundation of the current study.

As a gay woman and advocate on behalf of and with the LGBTQ+ community, I'm personally invested in this research. I have experienced and witnessed heterosexism, transphobia, heteronormativity, and social injustices both in my personal life and professional life. Specifically, I've witnessed a lack of LGBTQ+ competence in the classroom, supervision, scholarship, and mentorship as well as in counseling settings. For example, as a counselor, I have worked with clients who have received reparative therapy in the past. As a previous CIT, I've experienced counselor educators assuming my sexuality to be heterosexual, assert heteronormative statements in the classroom and within supervision, and publish heterosexist and transphobic manuscripts. The struggles and discrimination I have experienced connect me with the research. Further, I endure discrimination by currently residing in a politically and religiously conservative state where my rights are not recognized regarding employment, educational opportunities,

and public accommodations. The compilation of oppressive experiences fuels my passion to study LGBTQ+ competent counselor educators.

On the other hand, I have also been fortunate to work with empowering faculty who make a difference with LGBTQ+ social justice issues. One inspiring counselor educator in my graduate program consistently referred to his wife as “partner” and this small token of awareness empowered me. The same counselor educator directed a LGBTQ+ training program for CITs to facilitate throughout the region, providing advocacy on behalf of LGBTQ+ communities. My experiences impact my perspective of the world, specific to my understanding of queer theory, as well as how I will interpret my participant’s situations and experiences. Counselors and counselor educators are in positions of power with their clients and students. In order to best serve vulnerable, marginalized populations such as LGBTQ+ people, counselors benefit from being LGBTQ+ competent.

### **Methodology**

Qualitative research provides the opportunity to explore the process of a small number of participants. Due to the silenced voices of marginalized populations, qualitative research provides an ideal match to seek rich understanding of the participant process (Singh & Shelton, 2011). Qualitative approaches to research align with the needs of LGBTQ+ communities due to the diversity within the subgroups of this large population (Sears, 1992). Grounded theory and situational analysis will be the methods used to investigate the process of current self-identified LGBTQ+ competent counselor educators infusing LGBTQ+ competencies. A detailed description of these methods will be provided in chapter two.

There is a call for research to explore infusing LGBTQ+ competencies in existing counseling programs from the perspective of faculty (Estrada, Rutter, Ferguson, & Diggs, 2005; Sherry, Whilde, & Patton, 2005; Walker & Prince, 2010). The purpose of this study is to identify themes that characterize LGBTQ+ affirmative counselor educators' descriptions of infusing LGBTQ+ competence throughout counseling programs, including within the classroom, supervision, scholarship, mentorship, and advocacy. The research will begin to fill a gap within the existing literature. The results of this study will provide guidance for counselor educators to design and deliver LGBTQ+ competencies throughout counseling programs.

## Chapter II

### Methodology

The importance and requirement of integrating LGBTQ+ competence throughout counselor education is well established in counseling literature and professional standards requirement (ACA, 2014; ALGBTIC, 2009; ALGBTIC, 2013; Bidell, 2005; Whitman & Bidell, 2014; Whitman, Glosoff, Kocet, & Tarvydas, 2013). Within the current literature, research on LGBTQ+ competence is limited and does not address how counselor educators infuse learning for competence throughout the classroom, supervision, scholarship, mentorship, and advocacy. Counselor educators may lack the awareness, knowledge, and skills for how to address LGBTQ+ competence (Alderson, 2003; Biaggio, Orchard, Larson, Petrino, & Mihara, 2003; Cannon, Wiggins, Poulsen, & Estrada, 2012; Croteau, Bieschke, Phillips, & Lark, 1998; Israel & Hackett, 2004; Pilkington & Cantor, 1996; Rutter, Estrada, Ferguson, & Diggs, 2008; Sherry, Whilde, & Patton, 2005). While research has been conducted on CITs' LGBTQ+ competence (Alderson, 2003; Biaggio, Orchard, Larson, Petrino, & Mihara, 2003; Croteau, Bieschke, Phillips, & Lark, 1998; Rutter, Estrada, Ferguson, & Diggs, 2008), no research currently exists exploring the complex individual, collective, and contextual factors contributing to counselor educators who successfully infuse LGBTQ+ competence throughout counselor education. The voice of LGBTQ+ competent faculty has not been represented. Additionally, the definition of LGBTQ+ competence and LGBTQ+ affirmative counseling has not been fully clarified and may affect how counselor educators infuse competence within the classroom, supervision, scholarship, mentorship, and advocacy, which may affect the competency of CITs. To address the current gaps in literature, this study will use

qualitative methodology to highlight the complex individual, collective, and contextual factors of inquiry. Specifically, grounded theory will be used as the method and situational analysis as the supplement inquiry to explore counselor educators' infusion of LGBTQ+ competence throughout counselor education.

### **Queer Theory**

Counseling provides clients the opportunity for growth, to be challenged, explore hidden meanings, and to be heard. Similarly, the counseling classroom challenges CITs to bring values and beliefs to the surface while unraveling biases. Queer theory provides the framework within counselor education to mirror the intentions of counseling and the counseling classroom (Carroll & Gilroy, 2001; Frank & Cannon, 2010). Coming from critical postmodern and constructivist philosophy, queer theory challenges belief systems, untangles traditional concepts and categories, and provides opportunity for silenced voices to be heard (Pinar, 2009; Wilchins, 2004). The roots of queer theory are seen in Foucault's exploration of power relationships (Foucault, 1991), Butler's deconstruction of identity categories (Butler, 1990), and Sedgwick's challenge of Western discourse as knowledge (Sedgwick, 1990). Queer theory confronts identity categories as constructed by society and encourages stories to be unraveled through the voice of the participant, paralleling the counseling process (Plummer, 2011). Utilizing queer theory within counselor education supports CITs' evaluation of assumptions, values, and biases (Frank & Cannon, 2010). Queer theory questions positions of power, challenges the limitations of language, and deconstructs sociocultural influences (Pinar, 2009; Plummer, 2011; Wilchins, 2004). Counselor educators create a thoughtful, active learning environment for CITs to become LGBTQ+ competent by using queer theory as pedagogical practice

(Frank & Cannon, 2010). As queer theorist, Pinar (2009), states regarding queer theory in education, “The closet is being emptied, identities are being declared, practices and theories are being challenged, and... new [theories] formulated” (p. 2). When used within research, queer theory serves as a philosophical lens to examine silenced voices and invisible minorities, explore implications of sociocultural influences, such as heteronormativity, and seek new perspectives of intersectionality (Carroll & Gilroy, 2001; Semp, 2011). As a researcher, queer theory fits philosophically with my perspective and the intentions of challenging, decentering, and transgressing current LGBTQ+ competence within counselor education.

### **Qualitative Inquiry**

The origins of qualitative research as an approach to inquiry can be traced to sociology, anthropology, and history (Preissle, 2011). The qualitative research community includes an international network of scholars who embrace various philosophical perspectives, including queer theory (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011).

Qualitative inquiry emphasizes process and meaning through rich description of the social phenomenon being studied, while acknowledging multiple truths and highlighting how social experience is felt, lived, and given meaning (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005).

Similar to queer theory, qualitative inquiry originates from understanding participants’ views through a social, historical, present, and cultural focus through open-ended questions addressing the processes of interaction and contextual factors (Creswell, 2013).

Counseling aligns with qualitative inquiry as counseling focuses on clients’ meaning and understanding clients’ worldview. Research inquiries benefit when congruent with the professional theoretical framework (Bor & Watts, 1993).



Ironically, most counseling research utilizes quantitative methodologies, stemming from the positivistic, behavioral, and psychoanalytic influences (Nelson & Poulen, 1997). Scientific research may have negative connotations for multicultural participants given the roots are linked to colonialism, such as the collecting and classifying of “knowledge” of indigenous people (Smith, 1999). Specifically, quantitative methodologies focus on generalizing data on behalf of entire populations of LGBTQ+ communities, which include various voices and perspectives, thus reducing the spectrum and effectively silencing entire communities. This may erroneously lead to quantitative research considered as “truth” that “transcend[s] opinion and personal bias” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p. 2). Literature regarding LGBTQ+ topics and issues primarily uses quantitative methodologies, leading to potentially silencing an entire community (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Singh & Shelton, 2011; Smith, 2011).

Instead of classifying data into “knowledge” and “truths,” qualitative research recognizes the complexity and rich meaning of human life, including individually, relationally, culturally, and systemically (Nelson & Poulen, 1997). Qualitative inquiry aligns with the lens of holistic human life where many contextual factors may impact an individual at any given time. Within the counseling profession, an in-depth, thorough inquiry is best used to conceptualize clients and understand the context of client situations (Heppner, Wampold, & Kivlighan, 2008). Qualitative inquiry provides rich descriptions of individual experiences and processes, and has been recommended to study marginalized clients (Carter & Morrow, 2007; Yeh & Inman, 2007). Yet there continues to be a lack of qualitative research providing in-depth exploration of LGBTQ+ populations. Specifically, there is a dearth of qualitative research regarding LGBTQ+

competence within counselor education (Singh & Shelton, 2011). As LGBTQ+ voices have historically been silenced and dismissed, it is important to provide space for LGBTQ+ stories to be shared. Qualitative research provides the opportunity for participant voices to be heard and considered. As there is a growing demand for methodological diversity within counseling (Heppner, Wampold, & Kivlighan, 2008), utilizing qualitative inquiry for counselor education research aligns with the philosophy of the counseling profession, the researcher, and the current study (Nelson & Poulen, 1997).

Qualitative inquiries allow the researcher to explore the data as it is embedded within the context of the situation (Clarke, 2005). Further, qualitative inquiry provides opportunities to gain an in-depth, rich understanding of participants' experiences and processes (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Qualitative research accomplishes this by becoming immersed in the situation of inquiry and weaving a "complex text about race, identity, nation, class, sexuality, intimacy, and family... [from] different voices, different perspectives, points of views, [and] angles of vision" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p. 5). Qualitative inquiry emphasizes meaning and process from multiple perspectives (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Qualitative research inquiry will be used based on the gap within the literature, a lack of in-depth knowledge regarding LGBTQ+ competent faculty, and the ethical requirement to infuse LGBTQ+ competence throughout counselor education.

### **Grounded Theory**

Grounded theory inquiry consists of guidelines for collecting and analyzing data and then producing a theoretical framework that explains the data (Charmaz, 2014). Originally developed by Glaser and Strauss in 1967, grounded theory is qualitative

inquiry designed to construct a theory related to process emerging “through continuous interplay between analysis and data collection” (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 161). During these formative years, grounded theory utilized a positivist lens to “objectively” analyze data (Charmaz, 2014). Beginning in the 1990s, grounded theory has evolved from Glaser and Strauss’ positivist lens to a more constructivist perspective (Charmaz, 2014; Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Corbin & Strauss, 2014; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Specifically, Strauss teamed with Corbin in approaching grounded theory as a method of verification (Charmaz, 2014). While a positivist model of research reduces human behavior and experience into interpretations by the researcher rather than participants, constructivist research explores the meaning and in-depth processes experienced by participants (Nelson & Poulin, 1997). The researcher makes assumptions within the context of grounded theory about the world stemming from the idea of a fluid and complex world constructed by participants’ hypothesis of knowledge (Clarke, 2005). Further, knowledge is created by participants’ ontology, action, and relationships (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Corbin & Strauss, 2014). Grounded theory explores the meaning arising through relationships between people, cultural factors, and society (Blumer, 1969; Nelson & Poulin, 1997). As grounded theory continued to evolve, Charmaz challenged classical grounded theory in a presentation on constructivist grounded theory in 1993 (Charmaz, 2014). Charmaz discussed how researchers construct and interpret data and the importance of acknowledging researchers’ subjectivity in data analysis. Charmaz states, “We are part of the world we study, the data we collect, and the analyses we produce. We construct our grounded theories through our past and present involvements and interactions with people, perspectives, and research practices” (Charmaz, 2014, p. 17).

Charmaz's approach to grounded theory is one of many, and aligns with researching LGBTQ+ competent counselor educators due to the inclusion of the researcher's perspective, collaborative approach in data analysis, and recognition of multiple perspectives.

Grounded theory has evolved throughout time and incorporates themes, processes, and patterns of action and interaction to develop a theory (Charmaz, 2014). Aligning with the researcher's perspective used in the following study, Charmaz defines grounded theory as "systematic, yet flexible guidelines for collecting and analyzing qualitative data to construct theories from the data themselves" (Charmaz, 2014, p. 1). Deriving from a constructivist perspective, Charmaz identifies grounded theory as a co-constructed experience between participants and researcher (Charmaz, 2006). Grounded theory considers the environment, epistemological perspectives, and relationships of the participants and researcher. Charmaz's grounded theory makes several assumptions: "(a) multiple realities exist, (b) data reflect researchers' and researcher participants' mutual constructions, and (c) the researcher enters, however incompletely, the participant's world and is affected by it" (Charmaz, 2006, p. 349). Specifically, in this study, the researcher will learn about the process of counselor educators infusing LGBTQ+ competence throughout counselor education. As a result, each counselor educators' process will be illuminated and uniquely defined based on personal experiences. Direct quotes and words will be taken from the data in order to formulate an analysis.

Charmaz's approach to grounded theory aligns with the researcher's philosophy as it reflects both the researcher and participants' perspectives, recognizes multiple realities, and uses flexible guidelines for the researcher to follow (Charmaz, 2014). Grounded

theory from Charmaz's perspective will be the foundational method of inquiry used in this study.

### **Situational Analysis**

Situational analysis is a supplement to grounded theory and complements grounded theory's recognition of social processes. Situational analysis will be used in conjunction with Charmaz's approach to grounded theory. Situational analysis focuses on the individual, collective, and contextual factors within the inquiry of study (Clarke, 2005). Specifically, situational analysis centers on the process of the situation being analyzed and fosters exploration of coexisting and competing contextual influences. This supplemental approach provides space to illuminate the social phenomena in which the participants' are embedded while simultaneously highlighting beliefs, feelings, and experiences. In this study, the process of LGBTQ+ competent counselor educators infusing LGBTQ+ competence throughout counselor education is the primary situation of focus. Examination of the situation from the perspective of counselor educators may cultivate a rich, detailed understanding of the phenomenon. Situational analysis utilizes interviews and discourse, explicitly history, visuals, culture, and institutions, to explore meanings (Charmaz, 2014). Situational analysis considers "all knowledges as socially and culturally produced" and explores contextual factors impacting knowledge and experiences (Clarke, 2005, p. xxiv).

Situational analysis explicates traditionally silenced voices by providing opportunities for voices to be heard within the contained complex environment (Clarke, 2005). The LGBTQ+ community has long been silenced and discriminated against, thus utilizing situational analysis from a queer theoretical perspective for this study aligns

with the research aim. Building on this conceptual framework, Clarke states, “Empty spaces and silences have implications” (Clarke, 2005, p. 76). The researcher will consider the voice of the silenced participants through interviews, current literature, and discourse. Discourse is the analysis of language used in interviews as well as related visual images, symbols, and modes of communication (Clarke, 2005). For example, discourse analysis attends to power and how knowledge is produced and distributed by exposing social practices. Discourse analysis can be done by deconstructing texts, such as mission statements, standards of practice, and textbooks, or by exposing narratives from the interviews.

The goal of situational analysis is to produce multidimensional visual maps, rather than a one-dimensional theory, which is the goal of grounded theory, using the interviews from participants and discourse analysis as data for the maps. The three types of maps situational analysis produces are situational maps, social/world maps, and positional maps. Situational maps identify major elements in the situation. Social/world maps identify the participants and dimensions within interrelated discourses. Positional maps acknowledge difference and controversy within the situation (Clarke, 2005). Thus, “the situation itself becomes the ultimate unit of analysis” (Clarke, 2005, p. xxii), meaning the data’s relationship to each other is the situation. The situation may include the “voice and discourses, texts and the consequential materialities and symbolisms of the nonhuman, the dynamics of historical change, and, last but far from least, power in both its more solid and fluid forms” (2005, p. xxiii).

Situational analysis includes the voices of participants via interviewing as well as contextual influences, including local law, textbooks, mission statements, and historical

implications. Situational analysis provides inclusivity of data through a broad framework of the given situation. Rooted in postmodern philosophy, situational analysis considers diversity, historical implications, contextual factors, and situational knowledge and experiences.

### **Process of Situational Analysis and Grounded Theory**

The procedures for situational analysis and grounded theory begin with a conceptual framework as seen in chapter one of the study. The conceptual framework consists of “the system of concepts, assumptions, expectations, beliefs, and theories that supports and informs [the] research” (Maxwell, 2013, p. 39). The conceptual framework serves as the foundation for the research and provides focus for future inquiry (Maxwell, 2013). Further, the conceptual framework clarifies the research goals and development of the research question.

The conceptual framework for this study stems from the lack of literature regarding LGBTQ+ competent counselor educators, the lack of understanding how to implement LGBTQ+ competence, and the need for more research. Despite the ethical requirement for counselors to be LGBTQ+ competent, there is no clear consensus as to implementing LGBTQ+ competence within a counselor education program. Numerous studies call for the need for counselor educators to be LGBTQ+ competent in order to assist CITs in becoming LGBTQ+ competent counselors. The gap in research regarding faculty’s competence and the ethical requirement for CITs to be LGBTQ+ competent will be fully explored in this study. The research question, as mentioned previously, is: What is the process of infusing LGBTQ+ competence into counselor education by LGBTQ+ affirmative counselor educators?

**Participant selection.** The conceptual framework informs the development of data collection procedures, including participant selection, establishing interviewing questions, and data collection methods (Maxwell, 2013). Purposeful selection of participants for this study allows for intentionality when seeking participants (Creswell, 2013; Maxwell, 2013). Purposeful selection deliberately seeks participants who are able to contribute to the research by providing information rich data (Creswell, 2013; Maxwell, 2013). Qualitative research seeks to find themes within rich descriptions of participants' situations. Deliberately seeking counselor educator participants who self-identify as LGBTQ+ competent will illuminate the process of infusing LGBTQ+ competence throughout counselor education.

Maximum variation sampling will be used in conjunction with purposeful sampling to increase the potential for variation in diversity of process and meanings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Maximum variation sampling is a procedure in which the researcher systematically selects individuals representing the most diverse variation of participants (Maxwell, 2013). The use of maximum variation sampling allows for the determination of the best fit participants for the study through differentiating participants based on criteria.

For this study, in order to have maximum variation of LGBTQ+ competent counselor educators, participants will be sought from various regions, university affiliations, sexual orientations, gender identities, religious affiliations, age, race, class, ethnicity, and number of years in the profession (Clarke, 2005). Using purposeful sampling and maximum variation, participants will be sought via network connections, including CES-Net and other potential listservs and online forums. In addition,



participants will be selected due to their demonstrated leadership within LGBTQ+ scholarship and advocacy. Potential participants will complete the brief situational questionnaire, described below, on Qualtrics, an online data collection tool. Participants will be selected based upon levels of diversity present in the prospective participants to ensure maximum variation (Maxwell, 2013). Utilizing purposeful selection and maximum variation sampling will allow differences to be illuminated between settings and participants while highlighting intersectionality (Clarke, 2005; Maxwell, 2013). Participants will be self-identified LGBTQ+ competent counselor educators who infuse LGBTQ+ competence throughout the classroom, supervision, scholarship, mentorship, and advocacy. Maxwell (2013) emphasizes studying successful participants rather than unsuccessful ones, who might not be apt to build necessary relationships with researchers and contribute to research. These factors highlight the importance of engaging in purposeful sampling to study LGBTQ+ competent counselor educators.

Qualitative research is detailed and intensive thus having a small research sample size to explore each participant in-depth is important. Within grounded theory, participants are dispersed at different locations. For this study, participants will be faculty members at different universities and colleges across the United States. The number of participants will ensure a large enough sample size to explore a variety of themes (Creswell, 2013). Given the current lack of literature and the need to explore LGBTQ+ competent counselor educators in depth, four to seven participants will be identified. Previous research utilizing situational analysis methodology had similar sample sizes (Abrahams, Jewkes, Hoffman, & Laubsher, 2004; Waldman, 2011).

**Data collection procedures.** The researcher will utilize five collective procedures: (a) situational questionnaire, (b) individual participant interviews, (c) interpretive dialogues, (d) discourse analysis, and (e) memo-writing of researcher observations and conceptualizations. Prior to data collection occurring, participants will be required to sign an informed consent (Appendix A), which details the purpose of the study, procedures, potential risks and discomfort, anticipated benefits, rights of participants, and confidentiality. Each participant will chose a pseudonym to protect confidentiality. The interviews and interpretive dialogues will be recorded and transcribed by a professional transcriptionist, and the transcriptions and recordings will both be kept in a locked and secure location (Creswell, 2013).

First, each participant will engage in a situational questionnaire by filling out a form based on LGBTQ+ experience prior to the first interview (Charmaz, 2014). The situational questionnaire will request demographic information, including region of current employment, university affiliation, sexual orientation, gender identity, religious affiliation, age, race, class, ethnicity, and number of years in the profession (Clarke, 2005). Additionally, potential participants will be asked to write a brief paragraph on their unique situation related to identifying as a LGBTQ+ competent counselor educator. This information will guide the interview process and assist in gathering relevant data (Charmaz, 2014). Participant selection will be based upon their ability to be an information rich source while seeking maximum variation of experience.

Second, individual participants will engage in intensive interviews with the researcher until saturation is reached (Charmaz, 2014). Saturation of information is reached when there is nothing new to contribute (Charmaz, 2014; Clarke, 2005).

Intensive interviews provide in-depth exploration of participants' experiences, processes, and situations through dialogue (Charmaz, 2014). The emphasis will be placed on understanding the participants' perspectives, meanings, and experiences (Charmaz, 2014). The interviews will include open-ended questions structured by the researcher based on the research question and conceptual framework (Charmaz, 2014; Nelson & Poulin, 1997). The goal for intensive interviewing is to obtain detailed understanding of the participant, including focusing on areas of silence (Charmaz, 2014; Clarke, 2005). The interview process will allow the researcher and participant to explore depths within the participant through dialogue. The interviews will provide space for fluidity based on the developing discourse between researcher and participant.

The initial interview questions will be broad and general in order to allow opportunity for the dialogue to develop and shift as the participant leads. The role of the researcher automatically represents a position of power, thus it is imperative to be aware of the power as the researcher. An example of recognizing power is for the researcher to understand the language of participants before interviewing (Charmaz, 2014). In this study, I will acknowledge the contextual variation of LGBTQ+ language and invite participants to use the terminology that is most comfortable for them. Charmaz (2014) also recommends researchers be aware of their physical presence in relation to the participants. The interviews for this study will be done using online video communication, specifically Skype, and I will consistently reflect throughout data analysis on how my physical presence, including voice tonality, facial expressions, and clothing, may impact participants. By being aware of my presence in the position of

power as the researcher, I hope to reduce my impact to increase participant's authentic sharing of their experience (Charmaz, 2014).

Planned interview questions reduce the chance of imposing preconceived notions on the interview and can reduce anxiety of the researcher (Charmaz, 2014). Questions for the intensive interviewing process for this study include: (a) How would you describe LGBTQ+ competent counseling and LGBTQ+ affirmative counseling? (b) What have been your experiences as a LGBTQ+ competent counselor educator? (c) How do you infuse LGBTQ+ competence within the classroom, supervision, scholarship, mentorship, and advocacy? These questions are designed to allow participants to explore the uniqueness of their experience and for flexibility in delving into deeper areas of interest for the participant.

The third data collection procedure will be the interpretive dialogue sessions (Coe Smith, 2007). Interpretive dialogues provide the opportunity for participants to verify or further clarify researcher interpretations and analyses of the intensive interview data (Coe Smith, 2007); thereby allowing for researcher and participant co-constructed meanings within data analysis. The interpretive dialogue session is a data analysis interpretation session conducted via online or telephone conference. Once the first interview is coded, analyzed, and interpreted, the participant will be able to review the analysis and provide any changes to the interpretation during a dialogue with the researcher. Interpretive dialogue aligns with the philosophical stance of the research by providing opportunities for the participant's voice to be heard and not be silenced. Interpretive dialogues also result in new data being gathered. This data is then coded and analyzed and included within the data analyses of the interviewing process.

The fourth data collection and analysis procedure, as discussed earlier, is discourse analysis. Clarke refers to discourse as what has constructed meaning, such as visual images, symbols, texts, historical contexts, and cultural objects (Clarke, 2005). Discourse analysis will provide additional context to the study. Considering the impact of the institution on faculty, the researcher may explore the university and department mission statements, the handbook guidelines, and other standards counselor educators are required to follow (CACREP, 2013). Considerations of cultural and historical implications will be explored, such as state and federal laws and policies related to LGBTQ+ issues. Analysis of the discourse will provide new perspectives on the meso and macro level of impact on LGBTQ+ competent counselor educators (Clarke, 2005). Specifically, the researcher will follow leads based on interviews with the participants, including both stated discourse and silenced discourse. For example, the researcher will take notice of the participant's language and explore how "social, political, and cultural formations... shap[e] individuals' interaction with society" (Clarke, 2005, p. 147-148) by asking follow up questions related to their process.

The fifth and final data collection procedure is memo-writing (Charmaz, 2014). Memo-writing is the process of the researcher documenting her experience of the research process, including exploring bias and openly examining data for unanticipated themes (Nelson & Poulin, 1997). Memo-writing provides an opportunity for authentic reflection as the researcher acknowledges bias towards the research. "Memos catch your thoughts, capture the comparisons and connections you make, and crystallize questions and directions for you to pursue" (Charmaz, 2014, p. 162). Memo-writing is used simultaneously with interviews, interpretive dialogue sessions, and discourse analysis to

provide insight into how the researcher may impact the research (Charmaz, 2014; Clarke, 2005). The researcher will type the memos because “thoughtful memos on the computer are intellectual capital in the bank” (Clarke, 2005, p. 84-85).

### **Data Analysis Procedures**

The analysis procedures for this study will occur throughout the research process and are dynamic and fluid based on the findings. Grounded theory analysis utilizes coding as the analysis for the interviews and interpretive dialogues with participants and situational analysis supplements the codes by providing mapping techniques for analysis including situational maps, social/world maps, and positional maps. The combination of coding and mapping analysis techniques provide freedom and space for the researcher to creatively construct situational concepts based on the data (Clarke, 2005).

Coding is the vehicle for the researcher to make connections between the data and theory explaining the data, including action, explanation, feelings, and behaviors (Charmaz, 2014). Coding is the tool for “interrogating, sorting, and synthesizing hundreds of pages of interviews, fieldnotes, documents, and other texts” (Charmaz, 2014, p. 113). When coding the researcher labels segments of data into two phases, initial and focused coding, which can be concurrently and not in a linear fashion (Charmaz, 2014).

Within the initial phase of coding, the researcher studies fragments of data, including word-by-word, line-by-line, incidents, and in vivo (Charmaz, 2014). Word-by-word and line-by-line coding are often the first step in initial coding to focus on the details of the data. Incident coding refers to comparing data with similarities. In vivo coding represents the language of the participant, such as insider shorthand terms, innovative terms, or common metaphors (Charmaz, 2014). Initial coding remains close

to the data as the researcher maintains an open stance to allow the data to take the lead. As the data is separated into categories, processes will emerge. Another part of the process of initial coding is recognizing gaps within the data. Simultaneously throughout data analysis, I will memo my process of finding gaps in addition to insights regarding future data to collect. Charmaz (2014) recommends keeping codes simple and precise, continuously changing the code throughout the initial coding process, and to moving quickly through the data to “spawn a fresh view of the data” (p. 118).

Focused coding is the second phase of coding and analyzes, synthesizes, and conceptualizes large amounts of data, including the initial codes (Charmaz, 2014). Focused coding engages the data further into the comparative process of assessing the initial codes. Charmaz (2014) recommends considering patterns revealed in the initial codes, comparing initial codes to the data, and exploring gaps within the data. Focused coding organizes data into an emerging analysis by trimming excess and focusing the data. While the data is continuously emerging and dynamic, the goal of focused coding is to highlight “identifying moments” (Charmaz, 2014, p. 144).

The construction of codes comes from the researcher’s values and beliefs. As Charmaz (2014) states, “No researcher is neutral because language confers form and meaning on observed reality” (p. 114). As the researcher, I will examine hidden assumptions beneath the words I use to code in reflecting my views and values through reflexivity about my preconceptions and awareness of how my identity, experiences, and values impact the research. The hidden assumptions, views, and values will be acknowledged in the research thus demonstrating researcher reflexivity.

Situational analysis lays out the major human, nonhuman, discursive and other elements in the research (Clarke, 2005). Situational analyses reveal “the stunning messiness of social life” (Clarke & Friese, 2007, p. 370). As the step following grounded theory coding, situational analysis provides three different types of maps to answer the following questions: Why is this research important? What are important elements of the research? (Clarke, 2005). The three maps include situational maps, social worlds/arenas maps, and positional maps. The maps provide opportunities to analyze the data from different perspectives. Highlighting the most influential of each of these maps leads to the project maps.

The first maps of situational analysis are the situational maps (Clarke, 2005). Situational maps allow the researcher to consider all human and nonhuman elements that may impact the research (Clarke, 2005). In this research study, human elements consist of the participants, specifically the LGBTQ+ competent counselor educators. Nonhuman elements consist of interactions within the situation, symbolic elements, and material (Clarke, 2005). Nonhuman elements might include university and department mission statements, tenure and promotion criteria, CACREP requirements, and state and federal laws regarding equality. While every element will be included in the various situational maps, each element may not necessarily be included in later analysis. All situational maps will be kept throughout the research to refer to if needed later in the analysis to provide a new perspective of the data, including the questionnaire, interviews, interpretive dialogues, memo-writing, and discourse. Clarke (2005) refers to situational maps as “very messy” and “the art of research” (p. 89). Situational maps provide the space to explore connections in the data, consider relations among the various elements,



and analyze relationships. This step within situational maps allows connections to be made as well as recognition of where connections are lacking. As Clarke (2005) states, “Silences can thus be made to speak” (p. 102). Memo-writing simultaneously is necessary to fully analyze the “messy situational map,” which will lead to further changes and in-depth analyzing (Clarke, 2005, p. 102). Saturation, or “when no new data [is] emerging” (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p. 143), is used as an indicator of completion.

The second maps for situational analysis are the social worlds/arenas maps (Clarke, 2005). The social worlds/arenas maps originate from symbolic interactionism, specifically by focusing on the meso-level of social groups, social action, systems, and social formations (Clarke, 2005). These maps allow the researcher to consider the social worlds of the participants. There are multiple social worlds that may overlap, including social or reform movements, and the maps help the researcher determine the “big stories” to focus on (Clarke, 2005, p. 111). For example, the social worlds of LGBTQ+ competent counselor educators may include family, department and university requirements, and social norms. Clarke (2005) includes identities, shared ideologies, formal organizations, concerns, reform movements, and discourses as part of the social worlds/arenas maps. Upon forming social worlds/arenas maps, Clarke recommends the researcher memo responses to the following questions: What is the focus of this map? How do participants believe they should fulfill a particular social world? Are there any surprising silences? What are the hot issues/contested topics/current controversies in the maps? Each of the social worlds/arenas maps may influence participants in various ways.

The third type of map, positional maps, provides space for various positions of the data to be examined (Clarke, 2005). Positional maps reflect “issues, positions on issues,

absence of positions... and differences in... positions central to the situation under study” (Clarke, 2005, p. 126). These maps represent positions based on participants’ language and understanding of the situation. Positional maps frame positions outside of social worlds/arenas in order to deconstruct norms and reduce limitations, such as stereotypes. Positional maps reflect the positions participants have based on their perspective. For example, LGBTQ+ competent counselor educators may have various positions on how to define LGBTQ+ competent counseling or the integration of LGBTQ+ competence within counselor education. By focusing on multiple positions, I will be able to highlight all voices and identify silences (Clarke, 2005). The situational, social worlds/arenas, and positional maps are created simultaneously based on the data.

Project maps are the final products of combining situational maps, social worlds/arenas maps, and positional maps and are based directly from the codes used in grounded theory (Clarke, 2005). Project maps are tailored to a specific situation for an intended audience. For example, the project map for this study may focus on LGBTQ+ counselor educators’ infusion of LGBTQ+ competence throughout counselor education for the intended audience of counselor educators. Ultimately, project maps are dynamic, fluid, and constantly evolving thus it is imperative to recognize the irony of publishing a project map.

Upon identification of the initial project maps of the first round of data, round two will begin. Round two will consist of the same format as round one, minus the questionnaire: Interviews, interpretive dialogues, discourse, and memo-writing. Project maps will emerge representing the various rounds of data collection upon identification of the round two data collection and analysis. The project maps will demonstrate

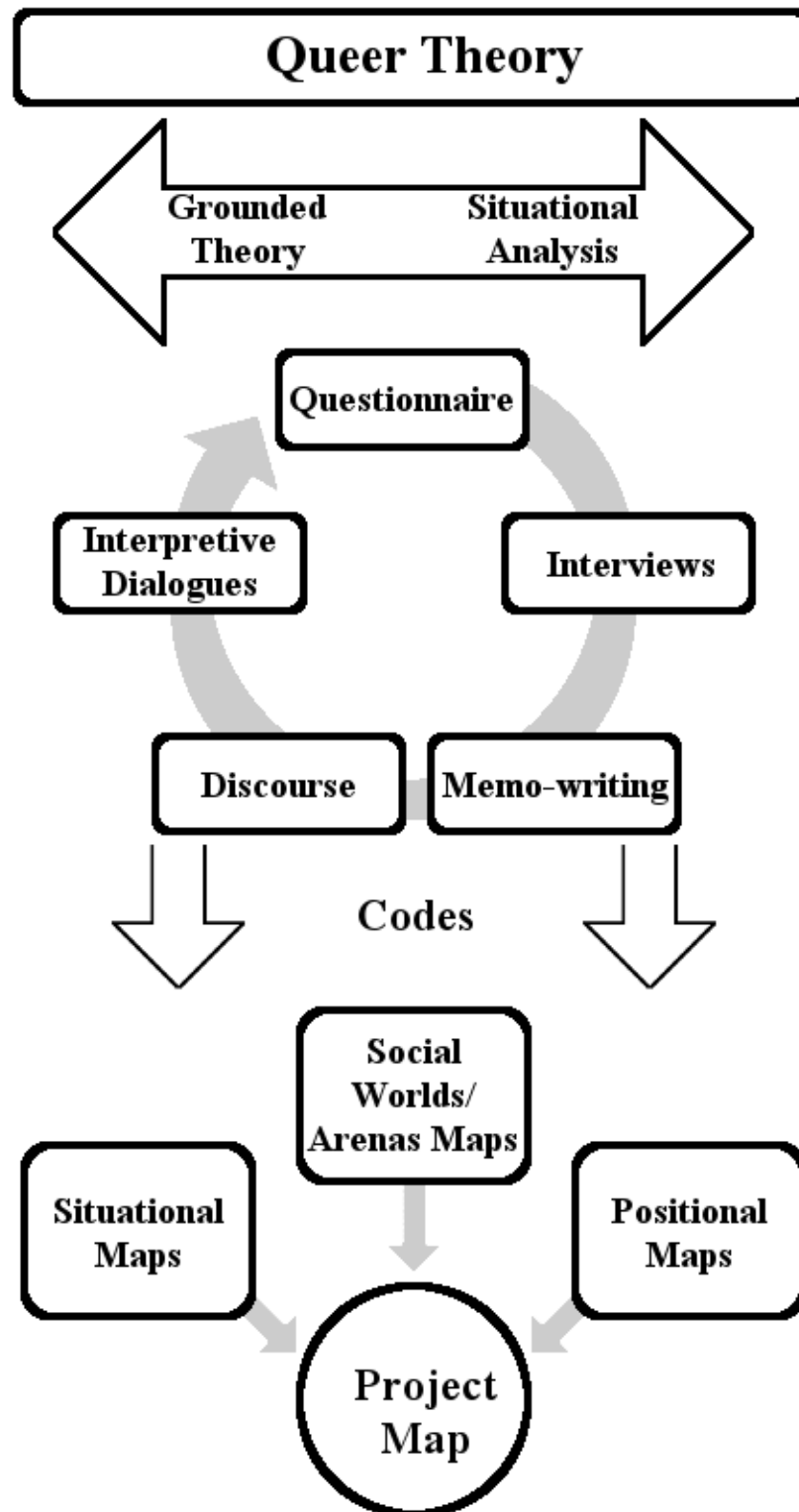
LGBTQ+ competent counselor educators' infusion of LGBTQ+ competence throughout the classroom, supervision, scholarship, mentorship, and advocacy. Ultimately, "grounded theory and situational analysis help theorize social action at the collective level" (Clarke, 2015, p. 141), thus leading to further awareness of how to infuse LGBTQ+ competence throughout counselor education.

### **Establishing Trustworthiness**

In qualitative inquiry, the researcher is the tool to gather data, analyze the data, and interpret the data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Maxwell, 2005). The researcher is the quilt maker, weaving stories from participants together in forming a complex, interpretive situation of "psychological and emotional unity" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p. 5). Trustworthiness and credibility are standards of verification in the quality of the research (Creswell, 2007). Trustworthiness is a validity criterion to address credibility and includes multiple elements, such as addressing researcher reflexivity and bias (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007), audit trails, interpretive dialogues (Coe Smith, 2007), and prolonged engagement (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Thus, it is imperative for the researcher to include credible and trustworthy strategies for the research.

Deriving from the lens of queer theory, I will consider multiple perspectives of knowledge and ways of understanding. My experiences and ways of knowing will influence the research (Charmaz, 2014). In accordance with queer theory and qualitative inquiry, objectivity is not possible, yet consistently challenging researcher bias may minimize the potential for participants being influenced by the researcher. In qualitative research, the researcher must engage in reflexivity to reduce the potential for researcher bias and participant reactivity.

Figure 2.10. Methodology Map: Visual of the process of methodology to visually clarify the ontological perspective of the researcher, data collection, and data analysis.



Researchers may utilize memo-writing as an option to reduce researcher bias (Charmaz, 2014; Clarke, 2005). As mentioned previously, I will engage in memo-writing throughout the data collection and data analysis process. Memo-writing will increase my ability to see my standpoints and assumptions while allowing me to challenge how my beliefs, values, and biases are impacting the research and participant reactivity (Charmaz, 2014). Further, I will process my personal reactions and experiences through memo-writing and consistently reflect on these reactions and experiences.

In conjunction with memo-writing to reduce researcher bias and participant reactivity, triangulation, or “the use of multiple sources, methods, investigators and theories” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 307), will be used to increase trustworthiness of the study. Specifically, I will engage weekly meetings with an inquiry auditor while leaving an audit trail. The chair of my dissertation committee, Dr. Elizabeth Horn, and I will discuss my thoughts, feelings, ideas, and experiences throughout the process of the research (Charmaz, 2014). Further, Dr. Horn will question representations in the research and ensure the methodology employed leads to an accurate representation of participants. I will also consult with my committee and counselor educators familiar with grounded theory and situational analysis in order to examine the assumptions and bias of the research. Investigator triangulation provides the opportunity for researchers to discuss the interviews and reduce bias impacting the research (Denzin, 1978).

As mentioned previously, interpretive dialogues (Coe Smith, 2007) will be used to provide participants the opportunity to co-construct meaning for the data analyses. Interpretive dialogue sessions provide participants the opportunity to provide clarification, verification, comments, and additional insights regarding the codes and maps analyzed by

the researcher. Specifically, I will interpret the first round of interviews into codes and then situational, social worlds/arenas, and positional maps. Upon completion of the first round of codes and maps, I will utilize an interpretive dialogue session to provide participants with the opportunity to correct errors of facts and challenge what they may perceive as inaccurate interpretations (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Participants will then be asked to confirm or contradict the interpretations of the data, thus assisting in the development of a dynamic, evolving theory. The interpretive dialogue sessions provide opportunity for participants to strengthen the trustworthiness of the study. Interpretive dialogues are then transcribed and coded, similar to the interviews. Participants are involved in the data analysis and can make changes to the situational maps, social/world maps, and positional maps I formed based on the data. This strategy empowers participants and increases integrity and credibility of the study (Coe Smith, 2007; Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Lincoln and Guba (1985) emphasize the importance of prolonged engagement throughout qualitative inquiry. Prolonged engagement refers to the investment of adequate time to achieve the study. Prolonged engagement increases the likelihood of accurately representing all participants as well as hearing the silenced voices. For this study, I will be engaged with the participants over several months. Utilizing my counseling skills of developing rapport, I will build trust with the participants and become involved with their situation, specifically the infusion of LGBTQ+ competence throughout counselor education. I will discuss the limits of confidentiality thoroughly and offer participants the option to use a pseudonym in the study in order to minimize the chance of being identified.

The process of LGBTQ+ affirmative counselor educators infusing LGBTQ+ competence throughout the classroom, supervision, scholarship, mentorship, and advocacy will be studied from a queer theory lens utilizing grounded theory (Charmaz, 2014) and situational analysis (Clarke, 2005). The research utilizes qualitative inquiry to construct meaning and experiences of self-identified LGBTQ+ competent counselor educators. The study may provide a framework for counselor educators to infuse LGBTQ+ competencies throughout counselor education.

### Chapter III

#### Participants

Seven self-identified LGBTQ+ competent and affirming counselor educators engaged in this study of exploring the process of infusing LGBTQ+ competence throughout counselor education. Maximum variation was achieved in terms of gender identity, race, ethnicity, age, experience within counselor education, affectional orientation, spiritual and religious identity, and geographic region. The first round of analysis included the situational questionnaire, an in-depth interview, memo-writing, discourse analysis, and interpretive dialogues. Each interview lasted a minimum of an hour and included the following questions: (a) How would you describe LGBTQ+ competent counseling and LGBTQ+ affirmative counseling?, (b) What have been your experiences as a LGBTQ+ competent counselor educator?, and (c) How do you infuse LGBTQ+ competence within the classroom, supervision, scholarship, mentorship, and advocacy? The questions were expanded upon with follow-up questions to develop further meaning for the participant's responses. Memo-writing was continuous throughout the data collection. After the interviews, discourse analysis began and included gathering materials based on the interviews. For example, gathered material included curriculum vitae, books and articles referred to by participants, and details on specific activities participants' mentioned in the interviews. Finally, the interpretive dialogues ranged from 30 minutes to just over an hour. The audio recorded interviews and interpretive dialogues were then transcribed and reviewed for accuracy to prepare for data analysis.



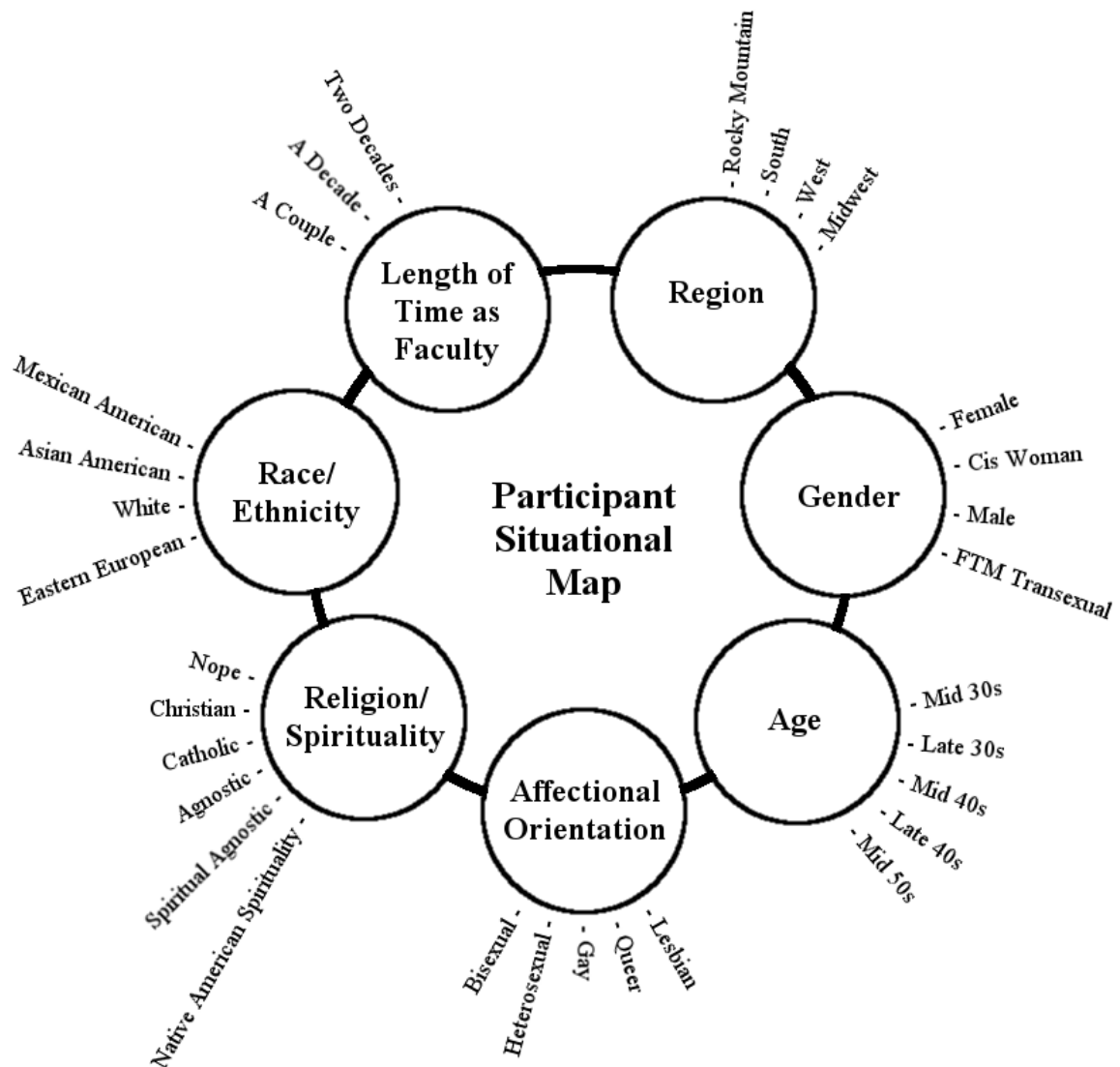
The first round of data was analyzed using first initial coding, specifically word-by-word and line-by-line coding, and followed with focused coding to analyze, synthesize, and conceptualize larger amounts of data. Following coding, situational mapping, social worlds/arenas mapping, and positional mapping was then utilized to further analyze the first round of data. These techniques facilitated the process of theorizing the experiences of LGBTQ+ competent counselor educators. The primary goal of this research is to gain further understanding of how LGBTQ+ competent faculty integrate LGBTQ+ competence throughout counselor education as well as exploring LGBTQ+ competent faculty's process of becoming LGBTQ+ competent. This chapter will describe participants and chapter four will describe themes from the first round analysis.

Of the seven participants, five identify as men and two identify as women. Six of the participants are cisgender and one is transgender. Four of the participants identify as White, one as Eastern European, one as Mexican Caucasian, and one as Asian American. Participant ages range from mid 30s to mid 50s, and years of experience within counselor education ranges from four to 20 years. Affectional orientation includes one lesbian, four gay men, one bisexual woman, and one heterosexual participant. Additionally, three participants also identify as queer. Spiritual and religious affiliations include Christian, Catholic, Native American spirituality, agnostic, and no affiliation. Geographic regions include Western ACES, Southern ACES, Rocky Mountain ACES, and North Central ACES.

The following diagram (Figure 3.10) provides a situational map of the seven participants. Situational maps “lay out the major human, nonhuman... cultural, political

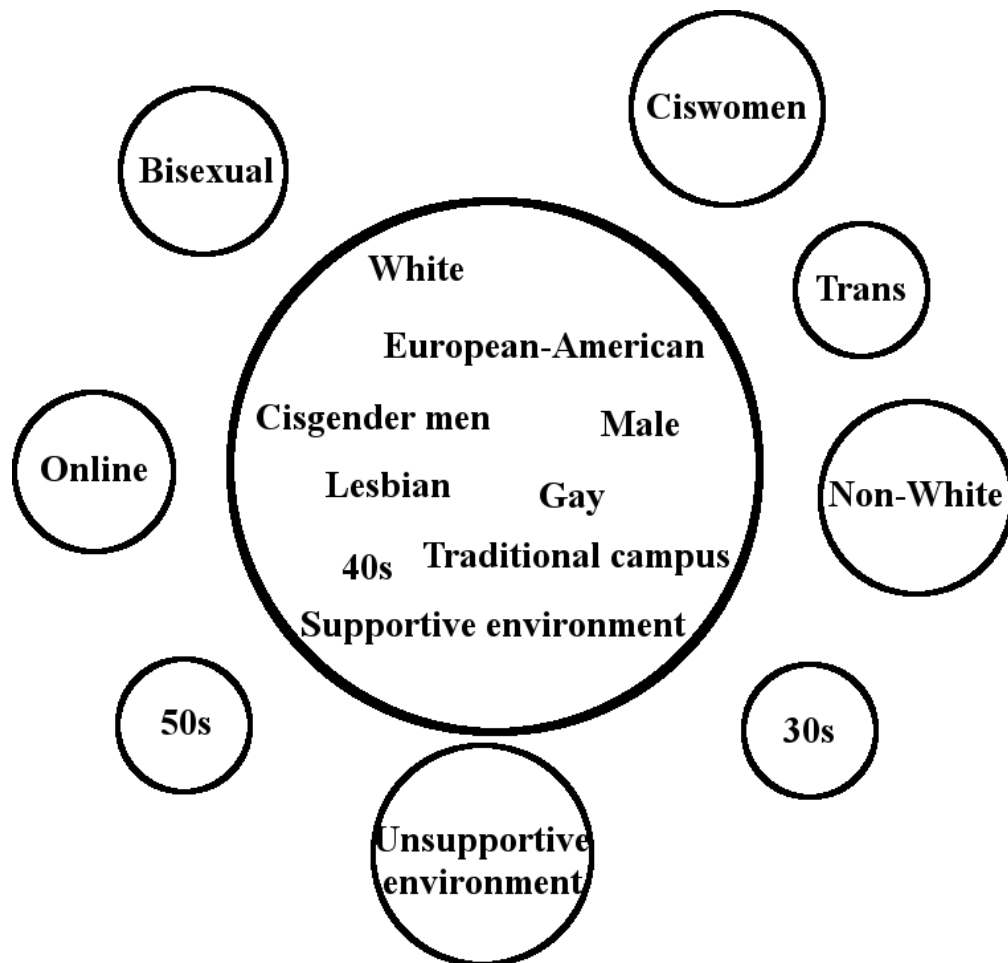
and other elements in the research situation of concern” (Clarke, 2015, p. 133). For this study, the situational map views each participant’s gender, age, affectional orientation, religion/spirituality, race/ethnicity, length of time as faculty, and current region of employment.

*Figure 3.10. Participant Situational Map*



Next, social worlds/arenas maps “lay out all of the collective [participants]” (Clarke, 2015, p. 133). Specifically, the social worlds/arenas map for this research (Figure 2) provides a visual evidencing the relationships of power among participants.

This visual represents “diversities within worlds” (Clarke, 2015, p. 140) of LGBTQ+ competence in counselor education to further highlight the maximum variation of participants. Within situational analysis the researcher is mindful of power dynamics by bringing forth silenced voices and highlighting differences. Mapping provides space for various experiences and understandings of the situation. For this study, the majority of participants identify as cisgender men, White, European-American, in their 40s, and work in a traditional campus and a supportive environment. The large centric circle highlights the majority identities of participants. Simultaneously, the smaller circles outside of the large circle highlight identities less represented in the study. The minority participants identify with some or all of the following terms: Bisexual, cisgender women, non-White, transgender, within their 30s or 50s, working at an online university, and working in unsupportive environments. Participant’s social worlds are pertinent to this study as they provide a framework for understanding participants’ perspectives, experiences, and processes.

*Figure 3.20. Participant Social Worlds/Arenas Map*

For each participant, co-constructed maps were formed. Each participant's map looks different based on the data collected. These maps are combined situational maps and social worlds/arenas maps. Situational maps focus on human, discursive, historical, cultural, and political elements regarding the participants (Clarke, Friese, & Washburn, 2015). Social worlds/arenas maps focus on social organizational and institutional interpretations (Clarke et al., 2015). For this research, participants connected elements from both maps thus combining the two maps. Each participant is situated in individual maps, as described throughout this chapter. The maps demonstrate the participant's identity represented by the size of the circle. Specifically, larger circles are a more

important piece to participant's identities. Circles are intentionally connected at certain parts based on relationship to participant identities and situational context.

### **Rachel**

Rachel was raised in a middle-class Jewish liberal family in the Northeast. Her parents were from working-class families who emigrated from Eastern Europe as a result of threats of annihilation during World War II. Rachel's father went back to school for psychiatry when she was a young teenager, and the family's financial stability declined. She became familiar with hiding the use of food stamps at the check out line at grocery stores while avoiding eye contact from other shoppers. Rachel felt as though she didn't fit in with American culture on many levels.

Rachel came out as lesbian at age 18. Rachel's mother was supportive from the beginning while her father requested she see a psychiatrist. In the late 1970s, homosexuality was not considered a mental illness by the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual* (DSM), but it was still in the DSM as ego-dystonic. Rachel went to a psychiatrist and said, "I have nothing to work on other than helping my father be okay with this" (I2, L607). Rachel's father eventually became an ally for her lesbian identity. She describes herself as being "out there" (I1, 497) and "advocating for [lesbian and gay issues] way back" (I1, 505). Currently, Rachel is in her mid 50s and has worked as a counselor educator for almost twenty years. As an out lesbian counselor educator, Rachel identifies as an affirmative educator for an online university. She is core faculty and teaches, chairs dissertations, supervises, mentors, and advises doctoral students. Previously, Rachel worked for 18 years on-campus at two traditional universities. She was involved in both teaching roles and administrative leadership roles. Simultaneously,

Rachel has consistently maintained a private practice and remains engaged in clinical work.

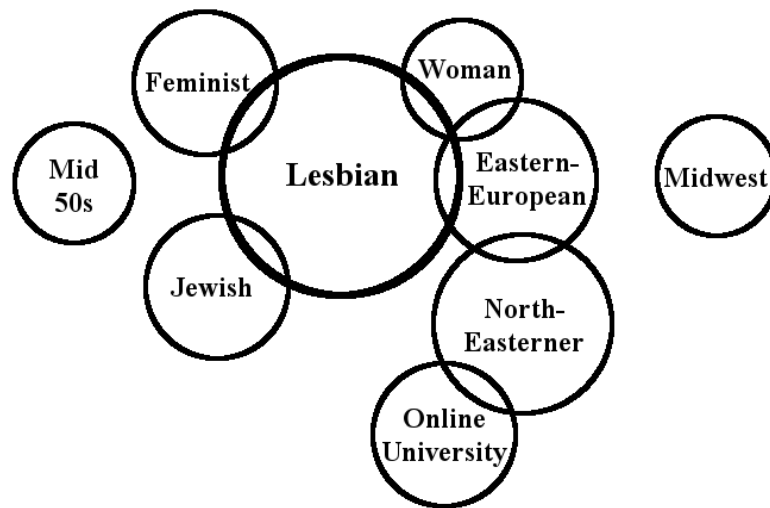
Rachel strongly identifies as a feminist woman, specifically regarding power dynamics, and is aware of her power as a counselor educator within the classroom. Rachel has written an entire chapter of a book specifically regarding her privilege as a White, educated counselor educator while being aware of her marginalized status as a lesbian. Rachel additionally identifies as “looking like a lesbian” (I1, L637-638). She refers to her appearance as stereotypically gay for a woman.

Throughout our interviews, Rachel often referred to her identity as lesbian. She mentioned her curriculum vitae is “pretty much pinked up and lavendered all colored up” (I1, 630), seemingly outing herself. Further, Rachel refers to her physical appearance visually demonstrating her affection orientation. Rachel stated, “I think I look like a lesbian” (I1, 613) and recalled a previous incident when a student stated, “I thought you were gay because of the shoes you wore” (I1, 260). According to Rachel, her outward appearance as lesbian impacts her both personally and professionally.

Rachel frequently referenced her age, specifically stating, “I’m old” (I1, L441). While Rachel referred to herself as “out there” (I1, 497) when she was young, she also refers to being “old school” (I1, L440). Rachel reflected upon growing up discussing lesbian and gay issues, but not being as aware of bisexuality and gender identity. She stated, “I feel old in terms of where things are” (I1, 454). Rachel continues to educate herself on bisexuality and gender identity in order to be LGBTQ+ competent as a counselor educator.

The situational map below refers to Rachel's relationship to her various identities. Her affectional identity is core to her identity and is the largest circle, whereas other parts of her identity and situation are less significant.

*Figure 3.30. Rachel's Situational Map*



### **Jack**

Jack reported incongruence with his professional identity and his personal identity. Currently in his late 40s, Jack was raised Baptist and became involved in conservative evangelical faith communities from a young age until his mid 30s. Jack was previously a minister for several years and has a degree in theology. He was surrounded by the evangelical Christian church for the majority of his life. Jack recognized his feelings of “same sex attraction” (I1, L93) at a young age, yet also realized that “people like me were going to hell. And so from the time I was 9 until the time I was [in my mid 30s], I was heavily involved in conservative evangelical faith communities and completely in the closet to the entire universe” (I1, L94-96).

Jack worked simultaneously on both his degree in divinity and degree in counseling. Jack describes this time as “an incredibly bipolar experience, because I was

going to my theology classes with ultra-conservative, tight ass people who were so driven by fear and so black and white and condemning... And [in the counseling program], all these funky, goofy people were coming in wanting to be people helpers” (I1, L110-114). Jack finds the discrepancy between his experience with the two programs to represent “the dichotomy of my adult life” (I1, L117-118). He worked as a counselor in a church for a number of years before returning to school for his doctorate.

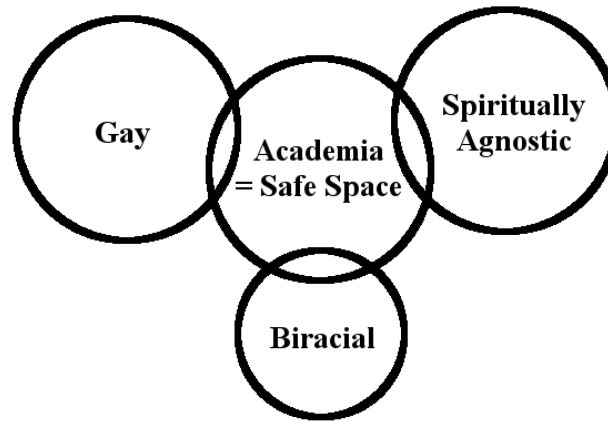
Jack came out as gay in his mid 30s while working on his doctorate in counselor education. While Jack identifies as spiritual and as a “minister at heart” (I1, L172), he left the evangelical Christian church when he came out. He reports being a “spiritual refugee” (I1, L188) and is focusing on reuniting his identity as a gay man and as a spiritual person. Jack explains he was raised in an era when being gay and Christian was not compatible, but finds those identities as more fitting in the current contextual environment. “It's exciting to see young people now saying, ‘I absolutely reject that false choice...’ There are many wonderful Christian faith traditions that are very progressive and open-minded and welcoming.” (I1, L148-149, L179-180).

**Professional.** As a counselor educator in the Midwest, Jack identifies as feeling safe to be out as a gay man. He finds academic settings to be progressive and open-minded. Specifically, Jack states, “Academia, to me, has very positive connotations, especially coming out of a very conservative background. A university, to me, feels like a sanctuary” (I1, L59-60). Jack’s identity as a gay man is at the center of his identity with pride and confidence. Other parts of his identity that impact his professional sense of self include his previous identity as evangelical Christian and current identity as spiritually agnostic. While Jack did not speak at length about his biracial identity, he did mention

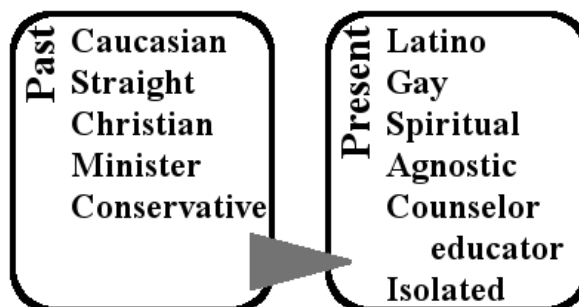


that he identifies as Mexican Caucasian and alluded that this is a big component of his identity as well.

*Figure 3.40. Jack's Situational Map*



**Personal.** Jack identifies his personal life to be a very different experience from his professional life. Jack's background as an evangelical conservative Christian impacts his current life by consistently being aware of his identity due to the internalized homophobia he experiences. Jack stated, "I just told someone last night that I get up every day and I'm acutely aware that I am a gay man. And I'm not sure that I always like that, that that's always at the forefront of my mind" (I1, L43-45). While being gay is a core part of Jack's identity, he discussed feeling isolated from the gay community, partly because the limited community where he lives in the Midwest and partly because "it's very difficult to get into the ones that are there if you're not 25 and willing to go clubbing every Friday night" (I1, L51-52). In many ways, Jack feels like a permanent refugee. He states, "I just feel like there's no place for me to go" (I1, L173). Jack's dichotomous experiences as a counselor educator and as Jack outside of academia leaves him feeling as though he is living an incongruent life. The situational map below (Figure X) demonstrates Jack's past self and present self.

*Figure 3.41. Jack's Personal Situational Map***Van**

Van identifies as a heterosexual, Asian American social change agent in his mid 40s. In terms of prioritizing identities, he is a father, husband, son, male, and heterosexual. Van reflects on his various identities being impacted by the contextual environment. Van stated:

I think part of it is just dependent on context, in terms of the system I'm in, which have an influence on what I'm conscious of and what I'm not conscious of on a daily basis. For example, my racial identity is something I'm conscious of when I'm at work... But when I'm at home, I'm not conscious of it. (I1, L31-32)

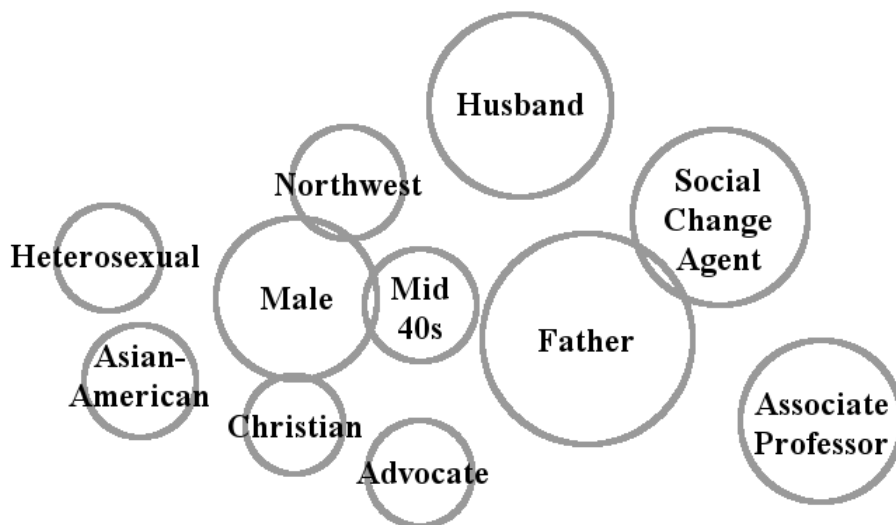
Van is a heterosexual, cisgender LGBTQ+ ally who others sometimes assume is gay based on his advocacy work. Van reported, "One of my colleagues that I worked with for the first couple of years thought I was gay and I didn't bring up my partner until two years later" (I1, L161-162). Van feels comfortable with others not knowing his sexuality and intentionally uses gender-neutral language, such as referring to his wife as "partner" (I1, L61). He finds other people to be uncomfortable with not knowing his sexuality. Van reported, "It was more uncomfortable for [my colleague] because she had

this perception of who she thought I was... And for me, I was okay with it because it wasn't like I was hiding anything” (I1, L168-172).

Van grew up Baptist and currently identifies as Christian. He hasn't found a church that recognizes all aspects of his identity, including his racial identity, ally identity, and feminist identity, yet he strongly identifies as Christian. He reported, “I'm able to integrate [my Christian identity] with my value system around LGBTQ issues, around social justice related issues” (I1, L103-104). Van finds integrating LGBTQ+ identities with religion to be cohesive.

Although Van currently works as a counselor educator at a university in a politically liberal city, he discusses the difficulties other faculty experience in integrating social justice changes. Van stated, “Sometimes... people are more hesitant to make those types of changes or to integrate social justice and multiculturalism in various real ways. I think sometimes it's easier to talk than walk the talk” (I1, L51-53). Van identifies as a social change agent who integrates change within the classroom, university, community, and national levels.

*Figure 3.50. Van's Situational Map*



**Sophia**

Sophia is in her late 30s and identifies with Native American spirituality. She reports her mother's side as being part Jewish and part Native American, yet the Jewish aspect of her mother's identity was minimized and almost disappeared during World War II. Sophia discussed generational cultural identities being passed down covertly and how she wasn't overtly aware of her connection with Judaism and Native American culture. Sophia stated, "Nobody named them" (I1, L54). LGBTQ+ topics were not discussed in Sophia's family. While Sophia identifies as bisexual, she is not out to her family. She stated, "I'm not out to my biological family, my nuclear family. It's funny because if they Googled me or something on the Internet, they'd probably figure it out. I think kind of they know, but nobody talks about it" (I1, L280-282).

Sophia also identifies as a queer, cisgender woman. She finds "queer" to be a primary identity for her with many components. For Sophia, queer includes a political identity as well as a personal identity. She identifies as being committed to LGBTQ+ equality and as a trans ally. Further, Sophia identifies as demisexual, specifically meaning she's attracted to other's emotional sense of self rather than their gender identity, as well as polysexual. For Sophia, polysexual is defined as, "The idea of being attracted to multiple genders" (I2, L71-72). Sophia adds, "I don't know what it means for me yet... [but] it's in my orbit right now" (I2, L64-69). Finally, Sophia also identifies as non-monogamous. She reported, "I consider myself somehow vaguely non-monogamous..." (I2, L109-110). Sophia has many parts to personal identity and at times wishes she were just one simple label. Sophia stated, "It would just be great to just be lesbian... Then you

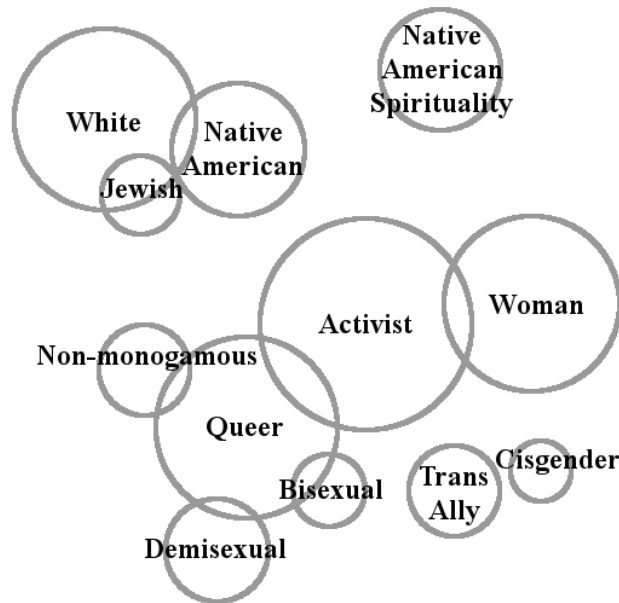
just can't, because you aren't" (I2, L957-958). Sophia experiences a lack of support from both within and outside the LGBTQ+ community based on her multiple identities.

Sophie reports awareness of her privilege, stating, "I try to be really critical of privilege. Of my own privilege and how I experience it in the world and I try to be aware of it" (I1, L50-51). Specifically, Sophia reports awareness of her cisgender and racial identity, although she is part Native American. Sophia states, "I identify as White... [because] my experience of the world is White. I experience privilege from others, so I don't outwardly say, 'Oh, I'm biracial,' or that kind of thing because it's not how I experience the world" (I1, L34-37). On the other hand, Sophia reflects on not viewing the world from a heteronormative, colonial perspective. She is acutely aware of living in a consumerist, individualistic culture and reflects on her identity differing from the normative environment around her. Specially, Sophia stated, "I try to be really critical of privilege. Of my own privilege and how I experience it in the world, and I try to be aware of it. That's not necessarily a very White way of walking in the world" (I1, L50-51). Sophia's passion for examining privilege expands into her work as a counselor educator in the Midwest. She has taught for several years and infuses LGBTQ+ competence throughout her work. Her teaching and scholarship focus explores counseling students examining their personal privilege. Specifically, Sophia's interests lie within helping counseling students gain insight into their personal identities within systems of power and oppression.

The situational map below (Figure 3.60) shows Sophia's strong identity as a queer, cisgender woman who identifies with Native American spirituality and is an activist. She

also identifies as White, Jewish, a trans ally, and as bisexual, yet those parts of her identity are not as significant to her personhood.

*Figure 3.60. Sophia's Situational Map*



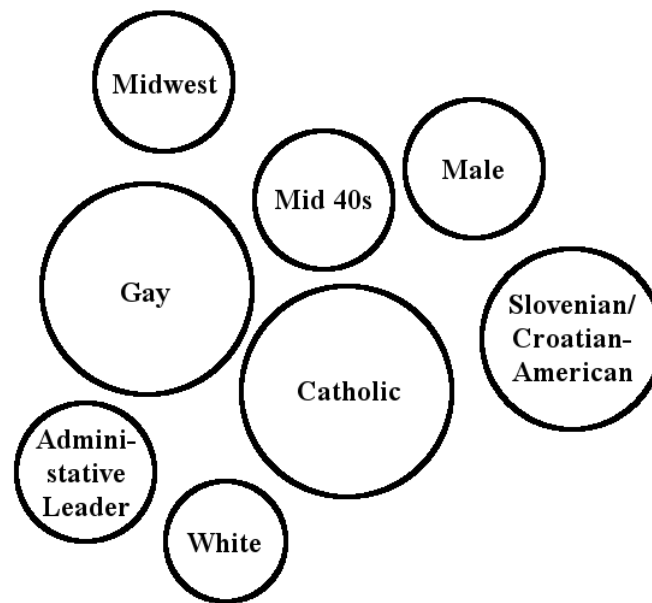
## Mark

Mark identifies as a White gay male with Eastern European ethnicity in his mid 40s. From the Midwest, Mark came out as gay following his master in counseling program and was met with support. While Mark is out in all aspects of his life, he also does not impose his identity onto others. He stated, “I don’t wear an, ‘I am gay’ t-shirt” (I2, L67).

Mark also identifies strongly as Roman Catholic. He views the Roman Catholic Church as potentially having room for inclusion for LGBTQ+ people, such as allowing openly gay people to be priests. Mark reported, “I have never personally had... a priest, or anybody in a religious position ever say anything negative about gay people... I personally have never experienced any negativity because of my sexual orientation or anything like that” (I1, L51-55). Mark does not view his identity as gay and Catholic

spirituality as incongruent; rather, he feels the Catholic Church dogma and teachings have areas for change. Simultaneously, Mark intentionally surrounds himself with LGBTQ+ support. For example, Mark chooses to live in an inclusive environment with larger resources for LGBTQ+ communities. Mark stated, “My current city, it has an LGBT neighborhood, it has LGBT resources, LGBT sports, clubs, and groups” (I1, L151).

Mark has previous experience in theater and improvisational acting classes, which was great training for his career as a counselor educator. Mark reported, “[My theater background] allowed me to be spontaneous... All the students love role playing” (I1, L546-549). He brings his personality and humor into his professional life. Mark has been a counselor educator for 14 years and is currently a leader in his department in the Midwest. Previously, he worked in the Northeast in a very open, inclusive environment where he was out as a gay man. As an out gay man, Mark infuses LGBTQ+ competency in all aspects of counselor education, starting with his office by having a rainbow flag on display in the office. While Mark reports that he does not walk in the classroom stating, “Hi, I’m Dr. [so-and-so], and I’m gay” (I1, L482), he intentionally infuses LGBTQ+ competence throughout his work, including classroom, supervision, mentorship, scholarship, and advocacy. Due to Mark’s experience and leadership with LGBTQ+ topics, students and colleagues seek his expertise on such matters.

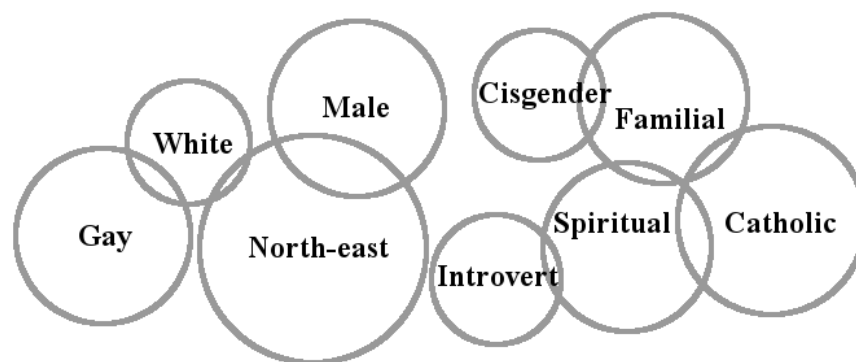
*Figure 3.80. Mark's Situational Map***Zach**

Zach identifies as believing in a higher power and in God, although he currently struggles with organized religion. Zach reported living his life “in-between” (I1, L91) in relation to his connection with religion and his identity as a gay man. He stated, “It’s hard when you’ve lived... 16, 20 years within a specific history, it’s hard to not have that be part of your worldview... The Catholic traditions... were definitely instilled in me from a very young age” (I1, L161-165). Zach reports feeling connected with Catholic tradition given it has been a part of his cultural history and background, specifically during the holidays, however identifies his spirituality as a struggle due to his identity as a gay man. Zach reports, “I just live my whole life in between... I do believe in God and a higher power... I feel a connection [with Catholicism]... I struggle with organized religion” (I1, L165-172). Zach finds a separation between his previous self and his current self due to the many changes throughout his life.



**Previous.** Zach identifies as gay, White, and a cisgender male from the Northeast. Zach grew up in the Northeast with close ties to his family. He was raised Catholic and received education within the Catholic system in the Northeast from first grade through undergraduate university. Upon graduation with his Bachelor's degree, Zach worked for six years at a Catholic college, continuing the Catholic tradition instilled in him. Zach has a strong identity as a Northeasterner where he spent the majority of his life, including receiving his doctorate at a Northeast university. Previously, his life in the Northeast as well as his spiritual and religious identities were pertinent to his identity while other aspects of himself were not at the forefront.

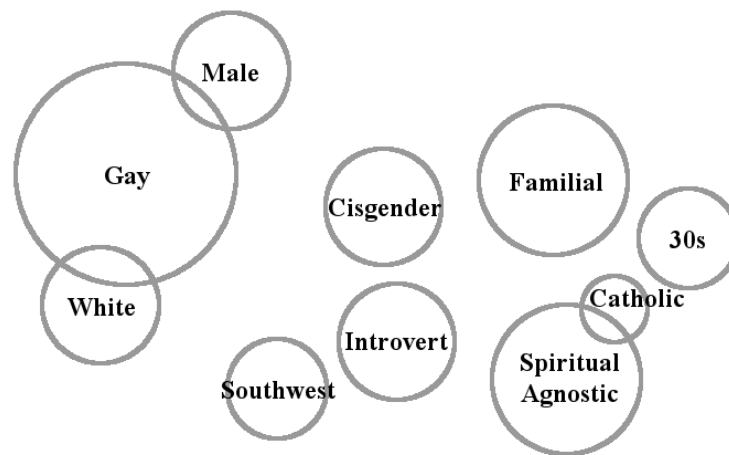
*Figure 3.80. Zach's Previous Situational Map*



**Current.** Currently, Zach is a counselor educator in his mid 30s working at a research university in the Southwest. As a gay, White, cisgender male, Zach reports having more awareness of his gay identity compared to his identity as a White, cisgender male due to the privilege he experiences with those dominant identities. Zach identifies as being very family-oriented as well as spiritual, although his Catholic identity is not as strong as it was previously. Further, Zach identifies as a spiritual agnostic who still believes in a higher being and in God. Zach reflected on living his life “in between” throughout the interviews, referring to often feeling awkward based on his identity,

specifically with his queer identity and related work. At times, Zach feels validated and positive regarding his queer identity within counselor education. He has experienced recognition and acknowledgment based on his work within queer scholarship. At other times, he does not feel as though he fits in and comes across stereotypes, assumptions, and negative implications based on his queer identity. Zach reported, “My life... has always been negotiating that in between space” (I1, L92).

*Figure 3.81. Zach’s Current Situational Map*



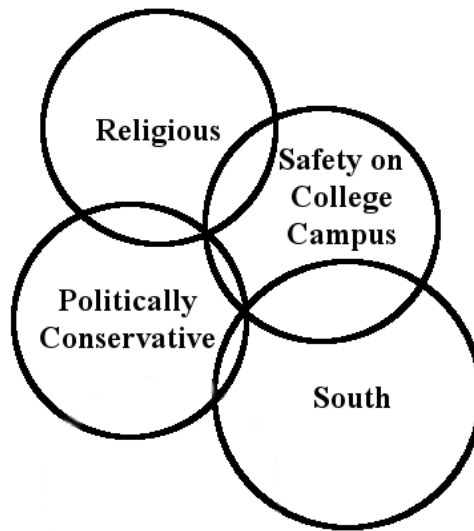
## **Bruce**

Bruce identifies as a “queer White European-American, female to male trans person” (I1, L32). Bruce is in his mid 50s and reported coming out as lesbian when he was in college. He stated, “I literally just ordered [a shirt]. It says, ‘Nobody knows I used to be a lesbian’” (I1, L37). Bruce was raised in a politically conservative, upper middle class family with three siblings and an alcoholic father. He was raised in a heteronormative environment. Bruce stated, “I was supposed to find Mr. Right, get married, join the Junior League, have babies, do all that stuff that women are supposed to do” (I1, L177-178). Along with the pervasive heteronormativity, Bruce’s mother voiced homophobic statements during his upbringing, leading to Bruce feeling unsafe to come

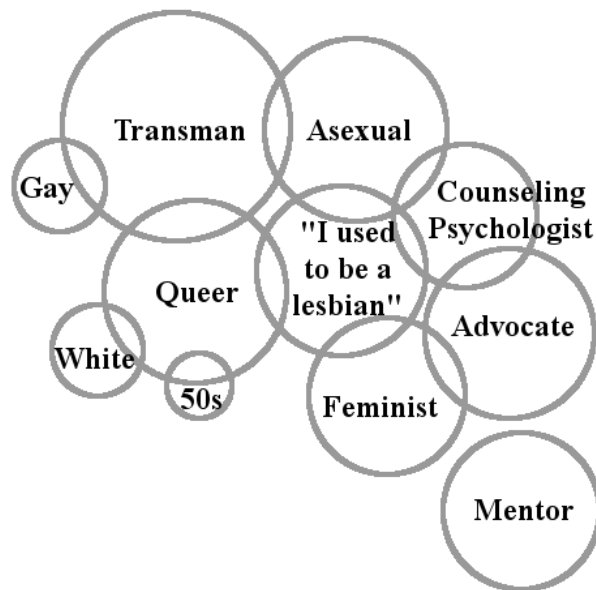
out. Bruce was part of a fundamentalist Christian church during high school and college, and reported, “It was made very clear to me that I was going to hell” (I2, L498). Bruce left the church while he was in college and came out as lesbian soon after.

Bruce’s parents divorced when he was a teenager and his father passed away a few years after the divorce. At the funeral, Bruce discovered his father was gay and had been in a relationship with a man for several years. This led to further homophobia within Bruce’s immediate family, thus Bruce remained in the closet as a lesbian for several years after his father passed away. He eventually came out with mixed support. A decade later, Bruce met a transgender man and became aware of his own gender identity. He came out as transgender soon after, and again was met with mixed support. Bruce reported that his mother has taken 15 years to use correct pronouns. He stated, “I had transitioned... 16 years ago. And it’s really only been in the last year and a half that she consistently gets the pronouns right” (I1, L316-317).

Bruce is a counseling psychologist who works in a counseling department in the South. Bruce appears very confident in his identity, and stated, “I’m not at all apologetic about my identity... I’m just out there and this is who I am” (I2, L474-476). The region Bruce works in has limited racial and ethnic diversity and is a politically conservative area. Bruce reports the university as a safe environment for LGBTQ+ people, and the outside environment to be not as affirming. Specifically, Bruce referred to surrounding cultural context as “misogynistic, bigoted, racist, homophobic rhetoric” (I1, L852-861). The map below demonstrates Bruce’s contextual situation from his perspective.

*Figure 3.90. Bruce's Contextual Situational Map*

Apart from his contextual environment, Bruce identifies as a politically queer, asexual, gay transgender man. Bruce reports while his affectional orientation is gay, he identifies primarily as asexual based on his lack of sexual desire. Bruce also strongly identifies as a mentor, specifically within the mental health field regarding his trans identity. As an assistant professor at a university in the South, Bruce focuses his work on transgender advocacy. He infuses transgender advocacy throughout his teaching and scholarly activity.

*Figure 3.91. Bruce's Identity Situational Map*

## Conclusion

The seven self-identified LGBTQ+ competent participants infuse LGBTQ+ competence throughout counselor education. Participants range in identities, including gender identity, race, ethnicity, age, experience within counselor education, affectional orientation, spiritual and religious identity, and geographic region. The current chapter describes each participant, including co-constructed situational maps. The following chapter describes the emerging categories, properties, and dimensions from the first round data analysis.

## Chapter IV

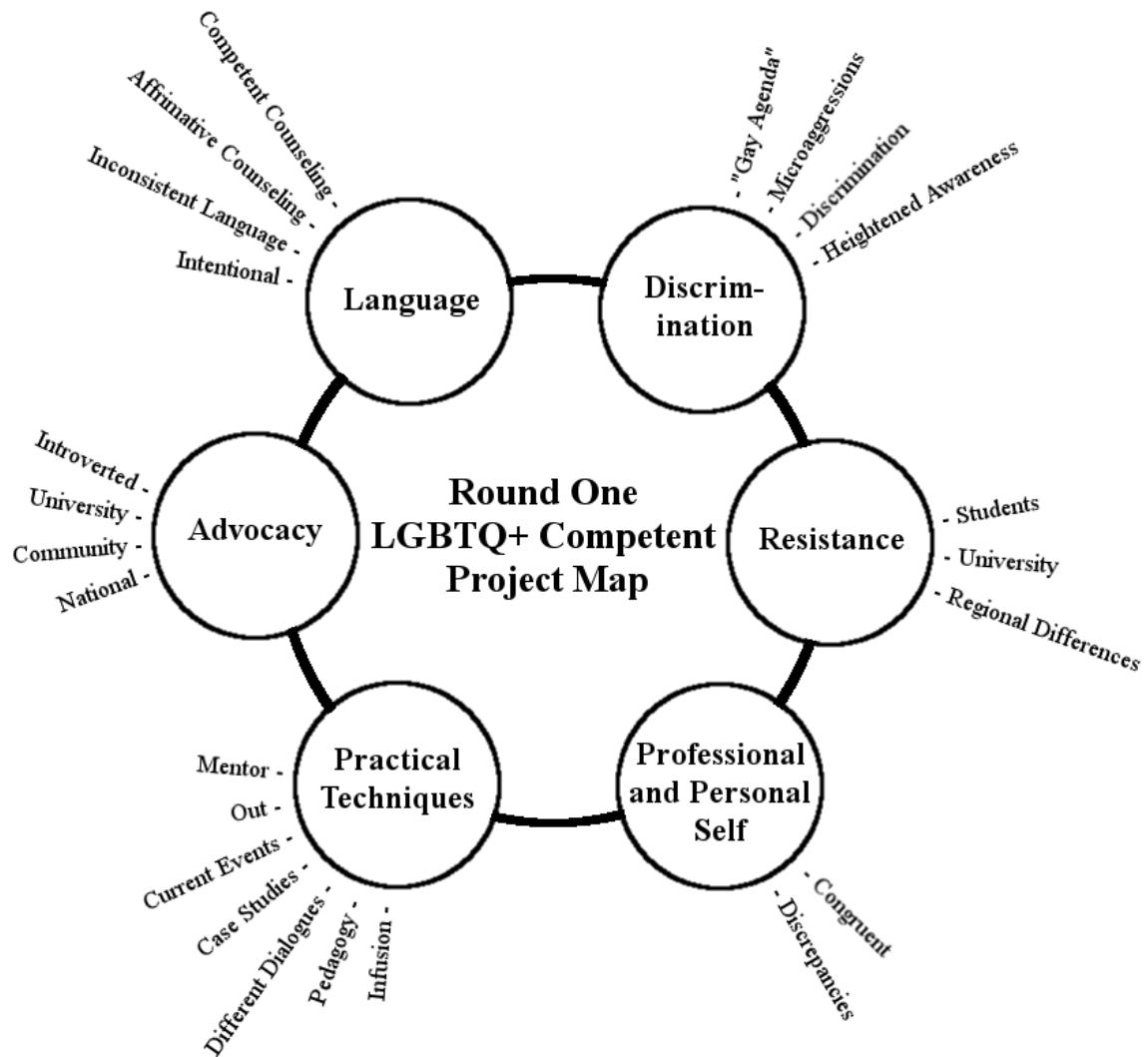
### Round One Analysis

The analysis of the first round led to several emerging categories. This chapter will describe emerging categories, properties, and dimensions from the first round data analysis along with the situations from which they emerged. The first round interviews lasted between 60-70 minutes and included the following questions: (a) How would you describe LGBTQ+ competent counseling and LGBTQ+ affirmative counseling?, (b) What have been your experiences as a LGBTQ+ competent counselor educator?, and (c) How do you infuse LGBTQ+ competence within the classroom, supervision, scholarship, mentorship, and advocacy? The questions were expanded upon with follow-up questions to increase meaning and understanding in participant responses. Memo-writing was continuous throughout the data collection. After the interviews, discourse analysis began and included gathering materials based on the participant interviews. Interpretive dialogue sessions were the final piece of the first round data collection. The interpretive dialogue sessions were between 30 minutes to just over one hour. The audio recorded interviews and interpretive dialogues were professionally transcribed and reviewed for accuracy to prepare for data analysis.

Following initial and focused coding of the first round interviews, memo-writing, discourse analysis, and interpretive dialogues, mapping strategies resulted in the development of the project map below (Figure 4.10). Each of the six emerging categories consisted of numerous elements, which varied for each participant. The emerging categories within the situational map include (1) *Personal and Professional Self*; (2) *Language*; (3) *Discrimination*; (4) *Resistance*; (5) *Advocacy*; and, (6) *Practical*

*Techniques*. Each category consists of various properties and dimensions. Figure 4.10 is the visual demonstrating the *Round One LGBTQ+ Competent Project Map*.

Figure 4.10. Round One LGBTQ+ Competent Project Map



## Language

*Language* emerged as a central category throughout round one data collection and analysis. Definitions and participant's understanding of LGBTQ+ competence and LGBTQ+ affirmative counseling varied. Further, categories regarding the challenge of inconsistent language and the importance of intentional language within counselor education were highlighted as emerging categories. Participant's situational context,

specifically participant's identities, backgrounds, and environment, highlight the various definitions and interpretations of LGBTQ+ terminology.

**Competent and affirmative counseling.** The first emerging property is inconsistency when defining LGBTQ+ competent and affirmative counseling. Participants had various definitions for LGBTQ+ competent and affirmative counseling, with similarities and differences. Participants experience LGBTQ+ competence and affirmative counseling differently, and their situational context appears to impact their understanding of the language.

In addition, participants reflected on negative connotations with the terminology. Participants indicated experiencing terminology to limit the full understanding of LGBTQ+ competent and affirmative counseling while forcing borders around definitions. Zach stated, "I hate all [of these terms], and none of them really quite match because competence... who decides what makes one competent and what are the knowledge competencies?" (I1, L234-236). Jack also had a negative reaction to terminology. Jack stated, "I don't like the terminology. It feels canned. It feels entrepreneurial" (I1, L353-354). For some participants, language is limiting and puts unnecessary parameters on knowledge and experiences.

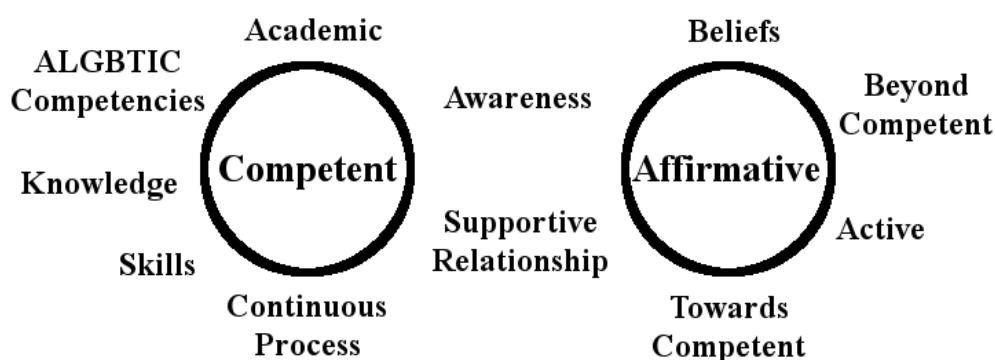
Participants reflected on competent and affirmative counseling as no different than general counseling given all counselors should be LGBTQ+ competent in order to be a counselor. Zach stated, "It's what counseling should be" (I1, L242). Mark reflects on the ethical component of LGBTQ+ competent and affirmative counseling, stating, "Counselors can't pick and choose who they work with" (I1, L433). Various interpretations of LGBTQ+ competent and affirmative counseling demonstrate the



inconsistency among LGBTQ+ competent counselor educators. The following details similarities and differences among definitions and participant's understandings to ultimately provide a deeper understanding of these commonly used phrases.

Figure 4.20 is a positional map of competent and affirmative counseling. LGBTQ+ competent counseling is shown on the left and LGBTQ+ affirmative counseling is shown on the right. Each descriptive word is positioned intentionally in relation to competent or affirmative counseling.

Figure 4.20. Competent and Affirmative Counseling Positional Map



**LGBTQ+ competent counseling.** Participants did not agree upon a single definition for LGBTQ+ competent counseling, yet there were many similar components. Four of the seven participants referred to ALGBTIC's Competencies (2009; 2013) when discussing LGBTQ+ competent counseling. As mentioned in Chapter One, ALGBTIC published the *ALGBTIC Competencies for Counseling with Transgender Clients* to provide guidelines for counselors working with transgender clients (ALGBTIC, 2009). Three years later, the *ALGBTIC Competencies for Counseling with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Queer, Questioning, Intersex, and Ally Individuals* were published (ALGBTIC, 2013). The two set of competencies total 74 pages and are divided into the following eight training domains: 1) Human growth and development, 2) social and cultural

foundations, 3) helping relationships, 4) group work, 5) professional orientation, 6) career and lifestyle development competencies, 7) appraisal, and 8) research (ALGBTIC 2009; 2013). Zach reported, “I would say LGBT competent counseling would mean counseling that people who have attended to [the ALGBTIC] competencies, and are aware of them, and use them, and apply them in their counseling” (I1, L188-190). Mark had similar reflections of LGBTQ+ competent counseling, stating, “Being familiar with ... the transgender competencies, the LGBQQIA competencies, being familiar with the literature, books, resources, professional associations. I would expect that a counselor educator focusing on teaching on those issues would be familiar with those items” (I1, L170-173). He expanded by reflecting on the difficulty of measuring competence. Mark views the lack of measurability for the transgender and LGBQQIA competencies as a criticism of the counseling profession. Mark stated, “We have these great tools out there, but we can’t say for sure that they’re effective and that they’re used. They’re just there in my view” (I1, L210-211). While participants agree on the importance of *ALGBTIC Competencies for Counseling with Transgender Clients* (2009) and the *ALGBTIC Competencies for Counseling with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Queer, Questioning, Intersex, and Ally Individuals* (2013), there still is no assessment available to measure LGBTQ+ counselor effectiveness.

According to participants, LGBTQ+ competent counseling is the foundation of awareness and knowledge. Participants referred to the parallel process between becoming LGBTQ+ competent and becoming multiculturally competent, as defined by the Multicultural Competencies (Sue, Arredondo, & McDavid, 1992). Many participants identify awareness as the first step towards LGBTQ+ competence. Sophia stated, “When

I think about competence, I think about knowledge, awareness, and skills... Usually, the first piece of that is awareness” (I1, L67-69). Zach discussed awareness of self as an important aspect, stating, “I feel like people are just so tied into themselves, in their values, in their beliefs, and their biases, and whatever that it’s hard to see the other person” (I1, L199-200). He continues by reflecting on the importance of self-awareness in order to truly be competent when working with LGBTQ+ clients. Jack agrees with this perspective, adding, “Have they sorted through their own personal issues and biases?” (I1, L286). Van views awareness as an essential foundation for LGBTQ+ competence. He reported, “[An LGBTQ+ competent counselor is] somebody who knows who they are... With an understanding of one’s self, one’s values, beliefs, biases” (I1, L239-240). Given participants’ perspectives, a foundation of self-awareness appears to be an important piece to LGBTQ+ competence.

Following awareness as the first step to becoming LGBTQ+ competent, knowledge emerged as another important component. Van reported, “[After awareness], it extends to being able to apply that knowledge in terms of skills in a clinical sense or possessing those skills and then taking action” (I1, L244-245). Mark has a similar perspective and stated, “Competency also involves having a knowledge base” (I1, L243-244). The Multicultural Competencies (Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis, 1992) identify culturally skilled counselors to have knowledge about the group they are working with. LGBTQ+ competent counselors are aware of LGBTQ+ people’s experiences, heritage, and history. If counselors lack knowledge, competent counselors will seek to learn more. Bruce reports transgender competent counselors will not rely on clients to learn about transgender competence, and will instead seek further continuing education training, read

the ALGBTIC Transgender Competencies (2011), and become familiar with the *World Professional Association for Transgender Health (WPATH) Standards of Care* (2015).

Van identifies knowledge in relation to the counselor regarding their ability to be okay with not knowing. Van stated, “[Competent counselors] are those more likely to be okay with not knowing” (I1, L143). Participants identify the importance of counselors to continuously receive ongoing education on LGBTQ+ communities.

Another emerging component defining LGBTQ+ competence is the notion of never reaching a final competence. There is no end goal of becoming competent because competence includes constantly growing and learning. Jack reported, “I’m in a process. I’m learning everyday... No one is an expert” (I1, L324-343). Sophia agrees with the idea of never fully attaining competence. She stated, “Competence is something I see that we’re always striving towards; it’s not something we achieve” (I1, L83-84). Van expanded on this and stated, “It’s a lifelong process that you strive for and then being part of that process and being okay with not knowing, being okay with being comfortable and being uncomfortable” (I1, L132-134). LGBTQ+ competence is a consistent movement of growth and building upon previous awareness and knowledge experiences.

The term *LGBTQ+ competence* led to several participants referring to the academic connotation behind the term. Specifically, Jack stated, “It’s always been a very academic... removed concept from who I am as a person” (I1, L213-214). Jack considers the term *LGBTQ+ competent* to be focused on the academia behind becoming competent, such as trainings and research. Similarly, Mark identifies LGBTQ+ competent counselor educators as the leaders in the field who have published and presented on LGBTQ+ topics. For some, this is a removed concept; for others, this holds true to who they are.

Specifically, Mark stated, “[LGBTQ+ competent counselor educators are] seen in their work setting as a go-to person on LGBT issues” (I1, L192-193). The term “LGBTQ+ competent” conjures images of academic leaders in the field of LGBTQ+ competent counseling who provide research and trainings on LGBTQ+ competence. All participants discussed their involvement as scholars, educators, and trainers to advocate and spread LGBTQ+ competence throughout their academic communities.

While participants did not agree upon a single definition for LGBTQ+ competent counseling, similar features include counselors’ self-awareness of personal values and beliefs, knowledge of LGBTQ+ topics, and applying the knowledge within counseling sessions. Further, common traits include counselors following the *ALGBTIC Competencies for Counseling with Transgender Clients* (2009) and the *ALGBTIC Competencies for Counseling with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Queer, Questioning, Intersex, and Ally Individuals* (2013) and the *WPATH Standards of Care* (2015). Finally, participants reported LGBTQ+ competent counselors never fully attaining competence and instead consistent growth within awareness, knowledge, and skills as foundational components of the ongoing process of maintaining LGBTQ+ competence.

***LGBTQ+ affirmative counseling.*** Similarly, another emerging property under *Language* is the differing interpretations of LGBTQ+ affirmative counseling. Some participants view affirmative counseling as a step beyond competent counseling, and others experience affirmative counseling as an initial step for competent counseling. Similar to LGBTQ+ competent counseling, affirmative counseling does not have a single definition all participants agreed upon, yet has similar features among participants.

Rachel viewed affirmative counseling as a step beyond competent counseling. Rachel stated, “Affirmative has a little bit more of an active piece to it” (I1, L52-53). Rachel has studied affirmative counselor education and has defined LGB-affirmative counselor education as actively working to provide LGB-supportive environments for students, faculty and staff. As a counselor educator, Rachel encourages her students to take a step forward towards action by challenging them to consider the LGBTQ+ diversity at their internship sites. Additionally, she intentionally persuades her students to seek LGBTQ+ clients during their internship experience by providing overtly LGBTQ+ safe spaces.

Similarly, Sophia finds affirmative counseling to focus on the counseling relationship with action and as a step beyond competence. Sophia stated:

Competence as being like almost sometimes ‘Here’s the bar.’ You have to meet this minimum requirement, at least. Anything over that is great, but you have to meet this minimum requirement. Whereas affirmative counseling is like, ‘We’re going to set the bar a little higher.’ (I1, L143-146)

Affirmative counseling is seen by some participants as a step beyond basic competence.

For other participants, affirmative counseling is seen as one step towards LGBTQ+ competent counseling. Mark stated, “Affirming counseling is creating a welcoming, safe environment, unconditional positive regard type of thing... Competency is more inclusive... having a strong knowledge base, having expertise, and working with the population” (I1, L260-269). Mark expands by identifying affirmative counseling as “just saying... they’re great, they’re supporting, they’re kind-hearted, they’re non-judgmental, but it doesn’t mean that there’s substantive knowledge there” (I1, L291-292).

Another perspective of affirmative counseling considers the supportive counseling relationship, whereas competent counseling speaks more towards knowledge and competencies. Mark reported, "I look at affirming counseling as more of creating a welcoming, safe environment, unconditional positive regard type of thing" (I1, L258-259). According to Mark, affirmative counseling focuses on being open, respectful, and inclusive. Instead of viewing affirmative counseling based on the counselor's perspective, Van views affirmative counseling on the connection the client feels towards the counselor. He stated:

I put emphasis on LGBT affirming counseling [as] when the client is able to connect with [the counselor]. I see so many times, not just all students, when they say, "I feel so good, I was able to connect with the client," and I follow-up with, "Well, was that client able to connect with you?" (I1, L265-268)

While Mark and Van consider affirmative counseling to be about the relationship, Mark focuses on the counselor's perspective and Van focuses on the client's understanding of the relationship. The dichotomy of perspectives highlights the diverse understanding of LGBTQ+ affirmative counseling.

Similar to LGBTQ+ competent counseling, some participants view affirmative counseling with a focus on values. Van identifies with understanding affirmative counseling to include personal values and beliefs. Van reported:

I don't think you can be an affirming counselor if you're not okay with marriage equality, or for gay and lesbian couples to adopt, or if you're not okay with your child being transgender, in terms of within your own personal life. (I1, L291-293)

Van is firmly rooted in the notion that one's personal values must align with the counseling profession's values in order to be an affirmative counselor. Van's perspective of affirmative counseling includes greater accountability compared with other participant's understanding of affirmative counseling by focusing on personal values aligning with professional values of LGBTQ+ affirmation.

Some participants consider affirmative counseling a step beyond LGBTQ+ competent counseling, whereas other participants view affirmative counseling as one of the steps within LGBTQ+ competence. Participants view affirmative counseling as focusing on the relationship based both from the counselor and client's perspectives. Finally, some participants view affirmative counselor's beliefs to align with the counseling profession.

**Inconsistent language.** Throughout the interviews, participants used inconsistent language. Participants' work in different regions, have different identities, and ages vary from mid 30s to late 50s. Currently in her late 30s, Sophia reflects on the consistency of changing language based on the evolution of society. Sophia stated, "Our language... evolves so quickly. Every year, the students come up with something [new]" (I1, L89-90). Regarding a university LGBTQ+ training manual she uses, Sophia stated, "We've already revised definitions of the terminology we use... at least twice [in eight years]. And we probably could have done it sooner and more often" (I1, L85-87). Counselor educators and counselors may have difficulty knowing which terminology works best for their students or clients. Sophia acknowledged the challenge to be aware of the evolving language. Sophia stated, "That's scary to a lot of folks... who don't know how to gain



access to that information or who feel overwhelmed by that amount of information” (I1, L96-98).

There are many acronyms within LGBTQ+ communities. Participants consistently used different acronyms, including “LGBT” (Mark I1, L37; Van I1, L30; Zach I1, L59), “LGBTQ” (Bruce I1, L366; Jack I1, L49; Rachel I1, L20; Sophia I1, L30; Van I1, L103; Zach I1, L187), “GLBT” (Mark I1, L577), and “LGBTQQIA” (Mark I1, L305). Mark stated, “I just think trying to say LGBTQQIA 20 times in a presentation is overkill” (I1, L312-313). Coming from a feminist perspective, Van intentionally uses “L” first as a political way to acknowledge male privilege and intentionally puts the female acronym first. Participants used many acronyms, with LGBT and LGBTQ being the most commonly used. This research utilizes the acronym “LGBTQ+” to demonstrate inclusivity for people who identify with various affectional orientations and gender identities.

Several participants referred to themselves as “old school” and seeing the world through the lens of an older generation. For example, Jack reported, “I still see the world through the eyes of an old school psychotherapist” (I1, L69). This may be reflected in the language Jack uses, specifically using the words “homosexual” and “same sex attraction” (I1, L93). Jack reflects on using the term “same sex attraction” to provide inclusivity for people who don’t identify as gay yet are attracted to those of the same sex. For Jack, this may reflect his 30 plus year history of identifying as an evangelical Christian in addition to his age. Jack stated, “I was heavily involved in conservative evangelical faith communities and completely in the closet to the entire universe” (I1, L95-96). Similarly, Mark reported feeling uncomfortable with the word “queer” based

on his age. He stated, “I don’t personally like the word queer. I think it’s just my generation” (I1, L322). Historically, queer was a derogatory term, and still is used negatively in some instances. In her late 50s, Rachel reported being “old” (I1, L441) and “old school” (I1, L440). Rachel acknowledged having familiarity with lesbian and gay topics, and less understanding of bisexuality and transgender. Rachel reported, “I grew up with lesbian and gay... I feel old in terms of where things are and being intentional about gender and transgender” (I1, L451-455).

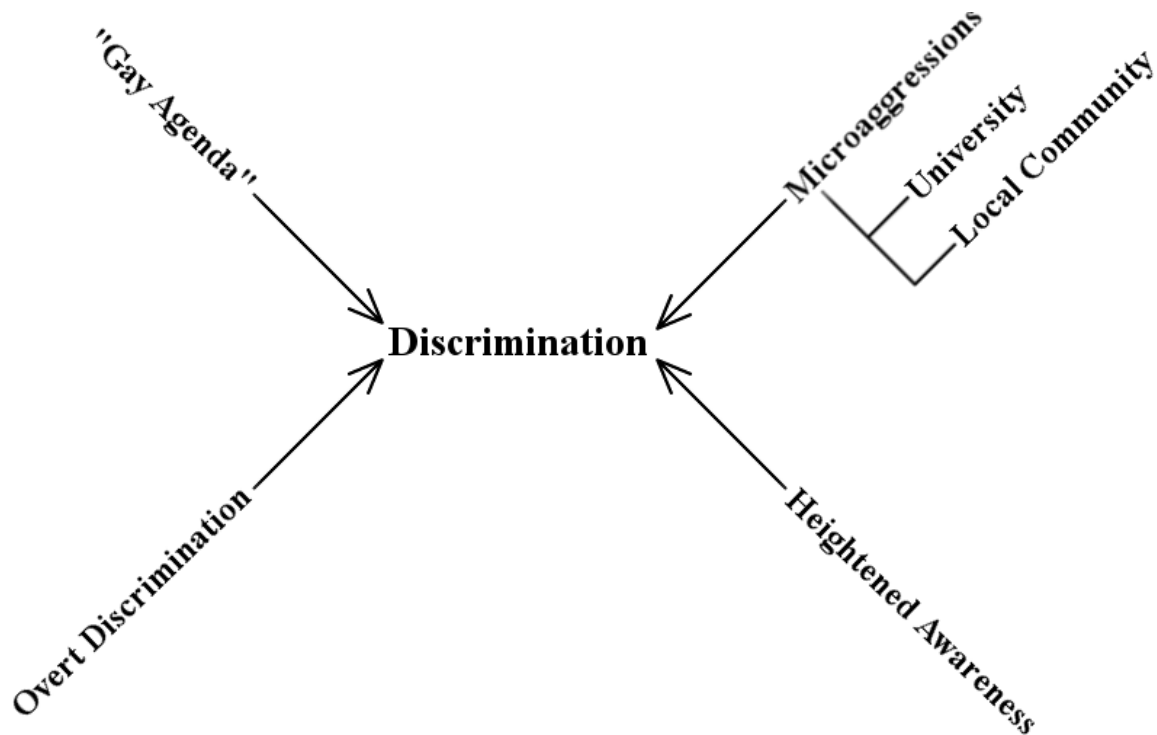
On the other hand, a few participants identify with using newer language comfortably. Zach and Sophia, both in their 30s, used the word “queer” intentionally and positively throughout their interviews. While queer has previously been used in a derogatory way, currently, mostly among younger generations, the word *queer* has been reclaimed with positive connotation. The social practice of queer language plays with identity politics of not wanting to be placed in boxes and instead challenging the binary system (Carroll & Gilroy, 2001). The variety of language demonstrates the inconsistency used among participants when infusing LGBTQ+ throughout counselor education.

**Intentional language.** Many participants referred to the intentionality behind the language they use. Using affirmative language, such as partner or spouse instead of husband and wife, in an intentional manner confronts heterosexism and transphobia by avoiding binary language. Participants discussed bringing intentional language into counselor education by using consistent, intentional language. As previously mentioned, each participant’s intentional language slightly differed, yet participant’s reported the importance of consistency.

A few participants reflected on the importance of language, specifically with the transgender community. Van reported, “When you work with a trans client, you’re going to slip up and use the wrong gender pronoun. That’s okay. It’s what you do when you do that is important, that allows that client to know, is this person affirmative or are they not?” (I1, L580-582). Participants discussed teaching students to use clients’ preferred pronouns.

### **Discrimination**

As participants described their experiences, several discussed discriminatory encounters throughout their career as counselor educators. *Discrimination* is the second emerging category of this study. Participants identify as marginalized based on gender, affectional orientation, race, ethnicity, and/or age. Marginalized faculty experience discrimination in several ways and specific to this study, the following categories emerged: 1) The inaccurate belief of participants pushing a “gay agenda” onto others; 2) Experiencing microaggressions within the university and local community; 3) Experiencing overt discrimination; and, 4) Feeling a heightened awareness of one’s own identity. Figure 4.30 is a positional map of the category, *Discrimination*.

*Figure 4.30. Discrimination Positional Map*

**“Gay agenda.”** A strong emerging property from round one is the false assumption of participants pushing a personal agenda related to their identity as LGBTQ+. The colloquial phrase, “gay agenda,” infers a gay or lesbian individual has a plan specifically related to their affectional orientation. Participants described experiences of being perceived as though they were approaching a situation with a lens specifically related to their LGBTQ+ identity. Jack reported:

When I taught counseling sexuality... I’ve had several students stop me... insinuating that I was pushing them... That’s what pissed me off. This really hurts my feelings... I don’t want to make people feel like I’m jamming my gayness down their throat. And I have to remind myself, “Wait a second. We are an underrepresented people who have significant issues and I don’t need to be apologetic about this.” (I1, L237-242)

Sophia has heightened awareness of her queer identity and is very conscious of not pushing her agenda. Sophia stated, “I’m aware of my own identity and I don’t want to come in and like, ‘All I’m going to talk about is this because I’m a queer person, all I’m going to talk about are queer issues’” (I1, L227-229). Sophia is very cognizant of how she comes across in the classroom because she wants her students to feel safe yet not too comfortable. She finds a balance of humanizing the process of becoming LGBTQ+ competent without pushing her own agenda. Sophia stated, “I don’t want to be the queer professor who doesn’t shut up about queer issues and who doesn’t hear students who have different opinions” (I1, L244-246). Many participants referred to balancing LGBTQ+ competence and being aware of their identity impacting the perception of their work.

Rachel described a situation in which students in a multicultural class complain to administrative leaders about Rachel’s focus on LGBTQ+ competency. She stated, “I’ve had students... say I talk about gay stuff too much in class” (I1, L263-264). Her heightened awareness of her “gay agenda” provided additional stress. Rachel reported not having support from the department, leading to heightened challenges with being authentic in the classroom.

Participants infuse LGBTQ+ competence throughout counselor education, leading to the false assumption of pushing a “gay agenda.” The misperceived “gay agenda” adds additional stress to participants. Minority stress is the internalized strain a marginalized individual experiences based on the dominant values within society (Meyer, 2015). In order to reduce the misperception and experience of minority stress, many check in with others regarding this. Jack regularly checks in with his students regarding the “gay agenda.” For example, in supervision, he will ask them forwardly if his identity is

affecting the supervisory relationship. Jack stated, “Every once in awhile, I would check in just being like... ‘Is the gay thing an issue?’ And I’ll usually just throw it in very nonchalant like that” (I1, L1099-1101). Participants who identify as LGBTQ+ are cognizant of their personal identity interfering with the professional relationship. On the other hand, heterosexual, cisgender faculty may not experience minority stress to the same degree as a result of their position of privilege and power.

Van discussed infusing LGBTQ+ topics to a further degree than he otherwise would due to the awareness of other faculty not addressing LGBTQ+ topics. As a heterosexual, cisgender ally, Van identifies as having power to infuse LGBTQ+ competence to a greater degree than his counterparts. Van reported, “I know students are not necessarily getting [LGBTQ+ topics] to the degree that I think they should in their other classes. That's why I do it a little bit more than most people” (I1, L389-390). Van experiences added stress due to the responsibility he is burdened.

While many participants have experienced negativity with the insinuation of a “gay agenda,” some experience support for infusion of LGBTQ+ competence. Jack described having mentors and professors support his research focus on gay men and spirituality, a topic close to his own identity. Jack stated, “Do I dare focus my research on something that’s that personal? I’m so thankful for those voices in my life that said, ‘This could not only be amazing research. It could change your life.’ It certainly did” (I1, L988-990). Participants who experienced support for their LGBTQ+-focused work reported a heightened sense of balance to lessen the minority stress of being perceived as pushing a “gay agenda.”

**Microaggressions.** Microaggressions are defined as “brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative slights and insults toward members of oppressed groups” (Nadal, 2008, p. 23). In our heteronormative society, microaggressions are often subtle and difficult to pinpoint in comparison to overt discrimination. *Microaggressions* are a strong emerging property under the category, *Discrimination*. Rachel described microaggressions as not knowing if it has occurred due to the covert nature of the aggression. Rachel reported, “It’s like racism. I don’t know if it’s happened” (I1, L703). Similarly, Zach reported, “It’s those issues that you’re hyper aware of, but then you’re constantly left questioning, ‘Is it me or is it them?’” (I1, L111). Participants reported experiencing microaggressions throughout counselor education both within the university setting and in the local community.

**University.** Participants discussed experiencing microaggressions within the university setting due to their identity as LGBTQ+. Many participants experienced microaggressions from leaders in the counseling department. The position of power impacts the experience and response from participants being in an inferior position. Previously as a doctoral student, Zach reported a leader supervising a class he was teaching stating openly heterosexist and transphobic comments while Zach was teaching. As a gay doctoral student in a position of lesser power, he was unsafe and uncomfortable. Hierarchal relationships are heightened in academia based on power distribution, thus binding the patriarchal, heterosexist structure of postcolonialism. Microaggressions limit opportunities and further the heteronormative lens through which to experience the classroom setting, a microcosm of the world at large.

Rachel has encountered similar microaggressive experiences. Specifically, Rachel infuses LGBTQ+ competence throughout her classes and encountered a resistant student. Instead of supporting Rachel's work, an administrative leader requested Rachel "tone it down" and she was forced to tolerate the student's discrimination towards LGBTQ+ people. In another instance early on in her career, a White, tenured, male colleague would refer to Rachel as "my favorite lesbo" (I1, L803). Again, this highlights the position of power her colleague was in as a higher-ranking man in counselor education, thus contributing to microaggressions within the counselor education community and university and supporting the patriarchal, heterosexist academic structure.

Demonstrating another example of heterosexism, Rachel had a previous professor advise her to not "pigeon-hole" (I1, L816) herself with exclusively LGBTQ+ scholarship. Simultaneously, six out of seven participants identify as focusing their research primarily on social justice LGBTQ+ topics. Sophia reported, "I pretty much almost do solely LGBTQ work in my writing and presenting. And even working where I'm at, I get solicited to go work at other universities just because I do LGBTQ work" (I1, L663-707). Many participants referred to focusing primarily on LGBTQ+ topics within their work as counselor educators and being sought after for their work. Participant's microaggressive experiences highlight the relevance of utilizing a queer theory lens, specifically to challenge hierarchical, heterosexist structures, while focusing on LGBTQ+ competence.

Sophia described a microaggressive experience when she visited an internship site on behalf of a counseling student. During the visit, the site supervisor said biphobic comments and inaccuracies about the LGBTQ+ community to Sophia in front of the



student. Sophia stated, “The site supervisor... said some really biphobic things which I’m assuming that they didn’t know who I am or know my identity [as a bisexual woman]. It was a little awkward... That shouldn’t happen” (I1, 609-614). Despite her discomfort, Sophia was able to inform the site supervisor on accurate research regarding LGBTQ+ communities, specifically regarding bisexuality.

Other microaggressions Sophia has experienced include being told her service work is not as valued or legitimate as other service, specifically referring to various LGBTQ+ committees she holds positions with. Sophia stated,

I’ve had very direct comments made. Like, “Well, I’m on these real committees and you’re not,” that kind of stuff. And it’s like I’m on probably, I don’t know,

three or four times as many committees as anyone else around me. (I1, L735-737)

Further, Sophia reported, “You’ll get folks who will say to you that your work isn’t as important” (I1, L741-742). While participants have often been told LGBTQ+ work isn’t as important, their work is sought after and contributes to an area of need.

Similarly, Zach reported microaggressions within the university specifically with the lack of hiring and retaining LGBTQ+ faculty based on the lack of acknowledgement for their LGBTQ+ related work. Zach stated, “We have not a great history of hiring and then maintaining [LGBTQ+] faculty... They struggled to find a fit in the system or have the system acknowledge that they felt respected” (I1, L51-54). Van identifies with discrimination and lack of inclusion as well. He discussed how LGBTQ+ research is not viewed as hard science and thus focusing on LGBTQ+ competence may not fit within academia. Van reported, “It’s viewed as political... The challenge with that is tenure” (I1, L739-740). As mentioned previously, participants experience being sought after based

on their LGBTQ+ expertise, yet simultaneously LGBTQ+-focused work is often not regarded equal to other scholarship.

Van, who identifies as heterosexual and cisgender, experiences microaggressions as an ally for the LGBTQ+ community. Colleagues assume he is gay based on the LGBTQ+ advocacy work he engages in. Van stated:

People think I'm gay... My sense is that they're trying to fit me with their schema or the schema of who an ally is or I think part of it's more so people tend to fight for causes that impact them personally. So, if you're gay, you'll fight more likely for LGBTQ, if you're a White gay male, you'll more likely fight for LGBT issues than you would for race issues or gender issues. If you're female, you'll likely fight against sexism more than racism. If you're a person of color, it's more race issues. (I1, L79-187)

Van experiences dissonance when colleagues question the work he is engaged in. Further, Van identifies the importance of not speaking on behalf of LGBTQ+ communities but instead advocate alongside LGBTQ+ populations.

On the other hand, Van reflects on the power he has as a heterosexual, cisgender advocate. He finds his identity provides him more respect to advocate than his LGBTQ+ colleagues. Van reported, "I think being heterosexual means that I can push more because the consequences are different for me than for my team and colleagues. I'm very cognizant of the heterosexual power I have" (I1, L339-341). Automatically in a position of power and privilege, heterosexual, cisgender allies have the opportunity to confront and challenge microaggressions in a safer environment.

**Local community.** Many participants experience microaggressions within the local community. Bruce leads trainings on transgender competence and trainees regularly broach the topic of genitalia and birth names during the trainings. Bruce addresses these topics by explaining the importance of not asking a transgender person about their genitalia unless there is a legitimate reason to do so. Bruce reported:

Yesterday at the end of this presentation, I said, “Everybody raise your right hand.” And then I take them through this little oath. “I do solemnly swear to never, ever, ever ask a trans person about their genitals unless I have a legitimate reason to do so.” I follow that with, “If it’s not okay for me to ask you about your genitals... then why is it okay for you to ask me about mine?” (ID1, L467-475)

Further, Bruce reported that students ask him for his “real” name, wondering about the original name on his birth certificate. Bruce stated, “People ask me, ‘What’s your real name?’ As if the name that I use is fake, somehow... So this idea that I’m an imposter, somehow” (ID1, L480-483). As a transgender man living in the South, Bruce experiences microaggressions regarding his gender frequently.

**Overt discrimination.** A few members referred to experiencing blatant discrimination based on their affectional orientation and/or gender identity.

Discrimination is prejudice which causes unfair treatment. Bruce described discrimination as, “It’s an out-and-out hateful reaction” (ID1, L464-465). Participants discussed overt discrimination towards transgender people as commonplace experiences.

Recent examples within the counseling profession include a discriminatory experience at a non-profit counseling agency. Bruce reported reviewing an intake form, and was pleasantly surprised the intake form included a category for transgender people.

In the same moment, an agency worker stated, “‘Oh, you mean those men who wear dresses,’ and just started saying really nasty stuff” (ID1, L443-444). Bruce quickly recognized while some people in the agency were aware of the importance of including transgender people on the intake form, not everyone was on the same page. He decided coming out would be the most beneficial strategy and stated, “‘I’m a transgender person, and I get that you might not understand that. But you’re talking about me when you’re making those disparaging remarks’” (ID1, L445-446). Bruce was able to use this experience of discrimination to promote awareness on behalf of transgender people.

While not directed towards Sophia, she reflects on discrimination occurring at her university towards transgender students. She stated, “Students are still getting harassed on the street... We had a pretty significant hate crime happen on campus” (I1, L553-555). Discrimination is seemingly not uncommon for participants to experience and witness.

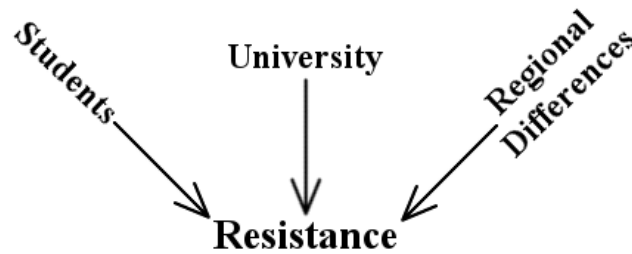
**Heightened awareness.** Another emerging property from round one of the study is the *Heightened Awareness* of their identity as LGBTQ+. Many participants reflected on feeling uncertain if their identity impacts certain situations, or if the situation had nothing to do with their LGBTQ+ identity. Zach stated, “There is a sensitivity that I think is different because of my different identity” (I1, L89-90). Specifically, Zach reflected on how he and a colleague were hired at the same time, and a leader in administration was very supportive and collegial with Zach’s colleague while defensive and guarded with Zach. While not certain, Zach wonders if it has something to do with his identity as a gay man. Zach reported, “It’s those issues that you’re hyper aware of, but then you’re constantly left questioning, ‘Is it me or is it them?’” (I1, L110-111).

Similarly, Jack experiences heightened awareness of his sexuality on a daily basis: “I get up every day and I’m acutely aware that I am a gay man” (I1, L44). Jack reflected on his heightened awareness and how he interacts differently with gay men due to his own gay identity. Jack reported, “I tend to be more businesslike... than I am with the other men and women who identify as straight. And I think what’s behind that is my fear that anything would be misconstrued as inappropriate between me and this young man” (I1, L943-945). Jack’s heightened sense of awareness of his identity leads him to act differently with gay men in order to reduce the chance that others may see him as coming on to his student.

Bruce also feels a heightened sense of awareness of his identity as a transgender man. He fears some people act kind to his face but turn around and act differently when he’s not present. Bruce stated, “People smile and nod, and then turn around and say, ‘There’s something wrong with that person.’ You don’t know that for sure, but that’s just the sense I get” (ID1, L162-163). This leads to Bruce feeling a heightened awareness of his identity, and may lead to an increase in minority stress.

### **Resistance**

The third emerging category is *Resistance*. For this study, resistance refers to participants experiencing difficult situations with others directly related to LGBTQ+ competence. Many participants discussed experiences of resistance with students, in the university, and regionally. Participants reflected on specific resistant situations and how these experiences led to increased minority stress. Figure 4.40 is a visual demonstrating a positional map for the category, *Resistance*.

*Figure 4.40. Resistance Positional Map*

**Students.** Participants shared their experiences of working with students resisting LGBTQ+ competency. Zach reported supervising a student who self-identified as a fundamentalist evangelical while she facilitated a gay-straight alliance at a school. The student struggled with bracketing her personal beliefs from the work she was doing. Zach helped the student become aware of her biases, thus increasing her openness and compassion towards the LGBTQ+ students she worked with. Zach reported, “You could see that conflict continue to evolve for her to the point where she softened” (I1, L631). Zach was aware of his personal identity as a gay man and worked on separating any feelings of personalization.

Bruce also has experience with resistant students. He reported showing a film on transgender people in a family therapy class and a student complained the film was inappropriate for the class. Bruce stated the Southern region where he works is conservative and some students aren’t comfortable with LGBTQ+ topics. While students have complained about Bruce infusing LGBTQ+ competency throughout the classroom, his department and university supports his work. Bruce stated, “My boss has always had my back on those issues” (I1, L530). While he experiences resistance from students, Bruce is able to continue infusing LGBTQ+ competence based on the support from his university and lack of enforced hierarchal structures.

Zach also has experience with students in the classroom who resist LGBTQ+ competence, many of whom identify as Catholic. Zach grew up Catholic and is able to connect with Catholic students in his program because he can identify with them. Those students who resist being open to LGBTQ+ clients often state that it's due to their beliefs they have no control over. Zach explains to them that he is both Catholic and LGBTQ+ competent. Zach stated, "I will say it's always a point of surprise for some students" (I1, L413). He is able to use these two parts of his personal identity to truly connect with resistant students who struggle with LGBTQ+ competence based on their personal values.

Rachel has also worked with religious students who have had difficulty with LGBTQ+ competency based on their religious values. Further, Rachel's identity as an out professor heightens the challenge. Rachel stated:

I've had some very religious students come to me and say, "This puts me in a very hard spot because this is what my values say religiously, but I respect your work. I respect you so I don't know what to do with it." And I always say, "This is a good problem to have and that's it, in the discomfort right now." So, hopefully, down the road, I've made some gay client safe because that person now might be a little more open. (I1, L242-247)

Rachel has also experienced difficulty working with religious, conservative students who resist Rachel based on her self-identified stereotypical lesbian appearance. Specifically, Rachel identifies as "looking like a lesbian" (I1, L637-638) and finds some students resistant based on her appearance. Rachel stated:

The challenge is sometimes that gets in the way for students especially if their religious values conflict. They don't feel as open about being honest about what

they really think. I don't mind making students uncomfortable. I just mind when they shut down or don't say what's going on. (I1, L645-648)

Rachel identifies her appearance as a potential barrier to students becoming LGBTQ+ competent when working with resistant students.

Sophia reported working with conservative, religious students who have personal beliefs not aligning with LGBTQ+ rights. She is very aware of not pushing her own identity onto students because “we can’t get to where we need to go if we start at the place where, nope, you’re not allowed to be there. Because I’m queer, I don’t even want to hear it” (I1, L235-237). Sophia reflects on the balance of being able to discuss LGBTQ+ competency while being open to students who may not have similar beliefs. She stated, “I just try to not hit it with a sledgehammer all the time because I know for some students who are just learning about it, that that can be really difficult” (I1, L317-319). Sophia hopes to provide safe spaces for students to express their personal values and beliefs, even if they are not congruent with Sophia’s identity. Simultaneously, she finds it difficult when students share with her that they believe she’s going to hell due to her identity as a queer, bisexual woman. Sophia reported, “I don’t love hearing when students are like, ‘Well, I’ve always believed you’re going to Hell.’ I don’t personally believe in Hell, but that’s still not a very nice thing to hear about yourself” (I1, L238-240).

Mark has published peer-reviewed journal articles and books on the topic of value conflicts within counseling. He takes a step back from looking at LGBTQ+ specific scenarios and considers how personal values impact the work of counselors. Mark reflected on the differences of the students he currently teaches in the Midwest at a liberal university compared to students he taught in the South. Mark stated, “Students would



also say, ‘No, I agree with [Julea Ward]. She has a right to her religious beliefs. And she should be able to refuse counseling a gay person if it goes against her religion’” (I1, L418-420). Julea Ward was a counseling student with personal values opposing same-sex relationships. She was dismissed from a counseling program for referring a client in a same-sex relationship (Hutchens, Block, & Young, 2013; Kaplan, 2014). Ward sued the school and the court stated Ward followed the *ACA Code of Ethics* (2005) by referring the client (Hutchens, Block, & Young, 2013; Kaplan, 2014). The *Ward v. Wilbanks* case was settled out of court (Kaplan, 2014). The 2014 *ACA Code of Ethics* clarified the standard by adding, “Counselors... seek training in areas in which they are at risk of imposing their values onto clients” (ACA, 2014, p. 5). The updated standard provides an ethical requirement for future cases where client issues and counselors’ personal values may be in conflict. Mark reported general differences of students’ personal values in different regions and acknowledges the students he has worked with in the Midwest often have values aligning with the counseling profession.

When Van first began teaching, he had a more difficult time working with conservative, religious students whose personal values differed from the counseling profession. He discusses attacking the students and saying, “You’re wrong” (I1, L424) and quickly realized that the student wouldn’t learn from those situations. “That student left the class feeling unsafe, feeling unheard” (I1, L425). Currently, Van helps conservative students unpack their values and beliefs to further understand how their value systems may impact clients with whom they work.

As many participants have worked with conservative, religious counseling students, many discussed various ways of working successfully with them. Mark

discussed outlining the parallel between discriminating against LGBTQ+ clients and African American clients. He stated:

I would then challenge [the student] further and say, “What would it be like if a counselor said, ‘Well, I am not comfortable working with an African American client, so I’m going to refer them to somebody else. I only want to see White clients.’ Would we allow that? Would that be legal?” (I1, L424-426)

Mark challenges his students to consider their personal values and how that impacts their abilities to counsel effectively. He encourages students to consider not just LGBTQ+ clients but other marginalized populations as well in order to consider the parallels of discrimination.

Participants who work with resistant students have additional minority stress other heterosexual and cisgender colleagues do not experience. Participants identify with the additional stress and recognize that, due to the personal nature of their work, they must be able to separate their personal identity and experiences in order to maintain health and wellbeing. Participants experience resistant students and are able to help students increase LGBTQ+ competence while simultaneously experiencing minority stress.

**University.** Participants reported some difficulties with advocacy in the university system. For example, Sophia reported challenges regarding transgender advocacy, specifically with gender-neutral bathrooms. She stated:

A lot of the work that I've been trying to do on our campus is to create better spaces for trans students... we've been doing a lot of work around getting the Preferred Name Policy in place... There are certainly buildings without gender-neutral bathrooms. (I1, L532-536)

Sophia is attentive to the needs of transgender students and advocates continuously on behalf of transgender students' rights.

Bruce reported the university having mixed reactions towards providing protection on behalf of transgender students, staff, and faculty. He discussed a meeting he was involved in where an administrative leader was resistant towards the university providing protection due to Title IX. Bruce reported, "Somebody said, 'You know, we don't need to include this because really that protection is already there with Title IX... There are more of us in this room who don't think those people need that protection'" (I1, L882-887). This is one example of patriarchal, heterosexist systems in positions of power lacking awareness of the oppression transgender individuals' experience. Participants experience resistance from universities regarding transgender rights within universities.

Another example of resistance at the university level is faculty who are uninterested in addressing LGBTQ+ competence within the classroom. Van spoke specifically about a lack of transgender competence, and stated, "What I hear a lot from [transgender students] is an inability of faculty to navigate issues of diversity in the classroom" (I1, L75-76). These experiences highlight the need for LGBTQ+ competent counselor educators, specifically regarding advocacy for transgender students and clients.

**Regional differences.** A few participants reported regional differences based on different universities of employment. Mark stated, "Generally I do think a region, a geographic area, the culture of the city or town, for example, does play an impact of it" (I1, L142-143). The location of the university of employment impacts participants' experiences.

For example, Zach worked in the South for one year and Bruce currently works in the South. Both participants reported working with conservative students and not feeling safe in the environment outside of the university. Bruce reported the cultural context of the surrounding environment to include, “misogynistic, bigoted, racist, homophobic rhetoric” (I1, L861). Fortunately, Bruce reported the university to be very supportive, stating, “My chair supports me. My dean supports me. The president of the university supports me” (I1, L872). The support Bruce experiences from the university balances the unsupportive, resistant surrounding environment.

Sophia completed her doctoral studies in the South and finds her current placement in the Midwest to be quite different. Specifically, Sophia reflected students in the South lacked knowledge and awareness regarding LGBTQ+ topics. Sophia questioned if the students were open-minded to LGBTQ+ issues and if they could become competent.

Mark also spent his doctoral studies in the South and reflected on how LGBTQ+ competent conversations were different in the southern region. He reported more students were struggling with LGBTQ+ affirmation based on their religious values. Currently, Mark would not be open to working in the South based on fear of discrimination and lack of inclusivity. He reported, “I’m at the point in my life professionally and personally where I would not want to be in, at this point, a small town in a southern state that wasn’t inclusive” (I1, L148-150). Mark works in an area with many LGBTQ+ resources and a specific LGBTQ+ neighborhood. Mark reported, “It helps with the quality of my life” (I1, L152). As a gay man, Mark is intentional regarding his situational context.

Sophia reflected on different language being used based on the region. While not certain if the differences are based on the region, she noticed limited language regarding LGBTQ+ competency in the South compared to her current placement in the Midwest. Sophia stated, “I don’t feel like I heard [LGBTQ+ competence] when I lived [in the South]” (I1, L202-203).

Participants reported LGBTQ+ competency looks different based on the region. For example, Bruce reported wanting to move back to the Northwest to be near his family, yet he recognizes he would not be making as big of an impact in an LGBTQ+ inclusive environment. Bruce stated, “I can make so much more of a difference here in [the South] than I ever could in [the Northwest], just on a day in and day out basis, to help make the world a little bit safer for LGBTQ people” (I1, L914-915). Bruce recognizes the South to have more room for growth regarding LGBTQ+ competence, therefore he intentionally continues to work in the South in order to advocate for equality and inclusivity.

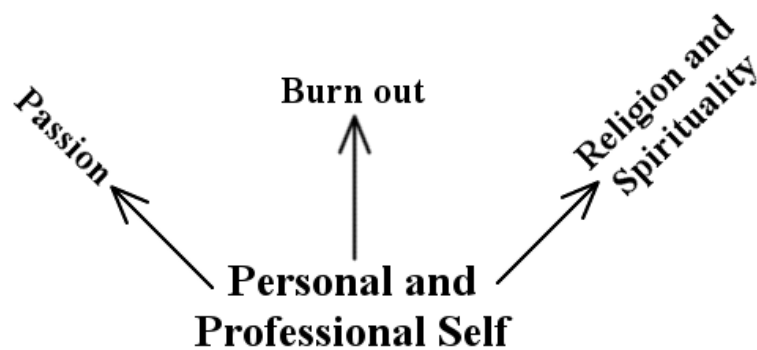
Participants reported regional differences based on previous and current employment locations. Differences include safety, discrimination, differences among students, and language. Many participants intentionally live in regions where they feel safe and supported whereas one participant intentionally lives in a region where growth towards equality is needed.

### **Personal and Professional Self**

The fifth emerging category is *Personal and Professional Self*. Participants reported various degrees of balance between their personal lives and professional lives. Some participants reported congruence between personal and professional lives, leading to a cohesive immersion of the two, whereas other participants’ experience a

differentiation between their personal and professional self. Three major properties emerged impacting congruence and discrepancies between personal and professional self. The properties include (1) *Passion*, (2) *Burnout*, and (3) *Religion and Spirituality*. Specifically, participants reported a passion for LGBTQ+ competence within counselor education. For some, burnout is a result of the passion. Participants also reported religion and spirituality as part of their personal and professional self. While some participants reported congruence between their personal and professional life, others experience discrepancies. Figure 4.50 is a positional map of *Personal and Professional Self*.

Figure 4.50. Personal and Professional Self Positional Map



**Passion.** Several participants identify as being passionate on behalf of their work as LGBTQ+ competent counselor educators. Participants spoke as to how their personal identity as LGBTQ+ fuels their passion, which carries over into their professional endeavors. Jack reported, “There’s no one in my world now that doesn’t know me both as a gay man and as an advocate for LGBTQ issues... It’s a passion for me” (I1, L361-387). Jack’s personal identity as a gay man strengthens his passion for LGBTQ+ advocacy. Jack describes his passion as “relentless” (ID1, L397).

Sophia has a similar perspective regarding LGBTQ+ competence as a personal passion. Sophia stated, “It’s my area of passion” (I1, L208). Participants alluded to passion fueling their work and professional satisfaction. Sophia stated, “I do think there's a time to be really, really passionate and I try to bring that” (I1, L317). Participants’ passion for LGBTQ+ competence throughout counselor education is directly connected to their personal identities as an LGBTQ+ person.

Participants reflected on different moments fueling their passion for LGBTQ+ advocacy. Sophia reported, “I still remember April of 2009 when two elementary school boys committed suicide because of LGBT and anti-racist bullying... I was just so torn up about that. I didn’t know them, but I felt like I don’t want to live in a world where children have to do that” (ID1, L366-372). For Sophia, her passion is fueled not only by her internal identity, but also by the discrimination and oppression evident in our heteronormative, patriarchal society.

Several participants’ personal values align with the counseling profession’s values, which in turn fuels their passion further. The alignment of personal and professional values leads to more congruence between personal and professional self. For Van, his personal values are at the forefront of his work as a counselor educator and strengthen his passion for LGBTQ+ advocacy. Van brings his daughter to a local Pride Festival to celebrate LGBTQ+ diversity, highlighting how his personal values align with his professional values of advocating on behalf of LGBTQ+ diversity. For Van, his personal values drive his work as a counselor educator and fuel his passion.

Similarly, Rachel’s personal identity as an out lesbian and activist align with her work as a counselor educator infusing LGBTQ+ competence throughout counselor

education. Rachel published an article specifically on her identity as a lesbian in counselor education and how her experiences of privilege and oppression have led to her success as a counselor educator and advocate with and on behalf of LGBTQ+ communities. As a result of experiencing passion for their work as LGBTQ+ competent counselor educators, many participants reported burnout.

**Burnout.** Several participants identify as being passionate on behalf of their work in counselor education. Participants indicated their personal identity fuels their passion, with burnout and fatigue being a potential result. Burnout is psychological stress and exhaustion. Van defined burnout as, “Feeling disenfranchised, frustration” (ID1, L42). A few participants reflected on working more hours than their colleagues and feeling more invested in the work. Sophia stated, “I think when you are invested and also when you have that identity, you end up working twice as hard in a lot of ways. So I think that's perhaps a caveat... You can burnout” (I1, L737-740). Sophia discussed the importance of setting boundaries and protecting energy because burnout can be more likely with marginalized counselor educators who are often expected to work more than their counterparts. For Jack, burnout “creates the gulf” (ID1, L402), leading to exhaustion and fatigue.

Van identifies with burnout as well. He discussed feeling burnout when he is the token LGBTQ+ advocate in the department. Specifically, Van reported:

I get burned out when students tell me, “Dr. such and such said wait to get to your class [with Van] to talk about these issues.” So the burdens on me to do it... I get burned out because changes are incremental... I start questioning, “Is it worth it? Is what I’m doing impacting practice?” (ID1, L55-69)



Van experiences burnout when change is not evident. Burnout impacts participants' balance of personal and professional self, as burnout from professional work impacts participants' personal lives. Participant's religious and spiritual identities are another factor impacting congruence and discrepancies between personal and professional life.

**Religion and spirituality.** Many participants identify as religious and spiritual, and some are able to cohesively integrate this aspect of their identity with their LGBTQ+ identity. Mark cohesively integrates his religious spiritual identity with LGBTQ+ values fluidly. Mark identifies as Roman Catholic and is able to cohesively blend his religious identity with his affectional orientation as a gay man. Mark reported:

I've never had... religious struggles... Under the current leadership of Pope Francis, I am more hopeful... The Catholic Church has not made progress [regarding LGBTQ+ inclusivity] in a way that I would like... I personally have never experienced any negativity because of my sexual orientation. (I1, L36-51)

While some participants find their religious and spiritual identity existing fluidly with their LGBTQ+ identity, other participants experience a discrepancy between their identity as religious and spiritual and their identity as an LGBTQ+ person. Jack and Zach are two participants who experience dissonance related to these identities. Specifically, Jack identified as a straight, conservative, evangelical Christian for much of his life and currently identifies as a spiritual gay man. Jack reported, "Walking in those two worlds was an incredibly bipolar experience... [It] really represents the dichotomy of my adult life" (I1, L110-118). Jack felt the two worlds of religion and LGBTQ+ were not able to coincide in the past, but sees that as changing in current times. Jack reflected on how he can be a spiritual, gay man, yet when he was younger, this was more challenging,

especially in his religious community. Jack reported, “The church was the ultimate authority” (I1, L154). Jack identifies as a “spiritual refugee” (I1, L188) because, while there has been progress, he hasn’t been able to fully connect his gay identity with his spiritual identity. Further, Jack continues to experience internalized homophobia based on the years he spent as part of the church and how the church’s values prevented him from coming out for almost 30 years. This leads to current fear Jack has about being out. Jack stated, “I feel like a scared little boy that’s just barely peeking out of the closet” (I1, L417-418).

Similarly, Zach, who was raised Catholic and currently identifies as culturally Catholic and spiritually agnostic believing in a higher power, stated:

It's been an awkward relationship between myself and my system based upon some of the different identities that I've held and do hold. In some ways, because I feel like my system doesn't know how to accommodate me in some ways. (I1, L40-42)

Zach’s spiritual identity has led to discrepant relationships as a gay man and counselor educator. He identifies as constantly balancing the incongruent identities he holds. Zach reported, “My life... has always been negotiating that in between space” (I1, L92). Consequentially, the minority stress of navigating his personal and professional life in the in between space may lead to burnout.

Participants experience various degrees of congruence and dissonance between their personal and professional lives. Various factors, including passion, burnout, and religion and spirituality, impact the congruence and dissonance. Many participants report personal identity as fueling their passion for LGBTQ+ competence in counselor

education while simultaneously leading to burnout. Further, some participants experience dissonance between their religious or spiritual identity while others experience congruence, both factors impacting their role as counselor educators.

### **Advocacy**

The fifth emerging category is *Advocacy*. Each participant strongly believes in the importance of advocacy, and they each advocate in different ways and at various levels. Most participants referred to the ACA Advocacy Competencies (Lewis, Arnold, House, & Toporek, 2002) and the various levels of advocacy as well as advocating both with and for LGBTQ+ individuals. Sophia suggested the following definition of advocacy:

I think of advocacy as really being about interacting with systems in a way that promotes a more egalitarian, I guess, way of being or way of operating within that system. So it's finding those places where someone is disadvantaged or someone is oppressed, or someone is disenfranchised or marginalized and helping to, as bell hooks would say, 'center of the margins.' (I1, L469-472)

Participants reported various levels of advocacy to include *Introverted Advocacy*, *University-level Advocacy*, *Community Advocacy*, and *National Advocacy*. Figure 4.60 is a visual of the *Advocacy Positional Map*.

*Figure 4.60. Advocacy Positional Map*

**Introverted advocacy.** Several participants reported engaging in advocacy at the microlevel within individual contexts in quiet, introverted ways. Mark feels more comfortable engaging in advocacy at the individual level. He stated, “I’m not someone that typically will march or storm a capital or whatever... I’m having conversations with folks on a one-on-one basis. I’m not going to be marching down the street holding a ‘Trans Lives Matter’ sign” (I1, L604-607; L620-621).

Bruce engages in one-on-one advocacy in various parts of his life, including his personal life. He described a situation in his personal life where he educated others on the limitations of viewing gender as a binary system. Bruce stated, “Whenever somebody says, ‘Oh, you’re having a baby! Is it a boy or girl?’ I would say, ‘They’re probably having a human’” (I1, L818-824). Specifically, Bruce challenges the misconception of gender as binary through introverted advocacy.

Another example of introverted advocacy is Jack’s rainbow sticker on his car. Jack stated, “Everyone knows nowadays what that means” (I1, L492). Rainbows are used as a symbol representing LGBTQ+ equality. Similarly, Mark has a rainbow flag in

his office to visually demonstrate his support for LGBTQ+ communities. This sparks conversations and Mark reported, “I advocate through education and having one-on-one conversations with people” (I1, L628).

Mark expressed frustration at the lack of acceptance for introverted advocacy.

Mark reported:

One of the struggles that I have with the field is sometimes there's some professionals within our field who view social justice very narrowly, and if you only practice social justice according to their definition, then you're fine, but if you don't, then you're not doing social justice work, and I really take offense to that. (I1, L604-610)

Mark continued, “I'm not a confrontational, in-your-face kind of approach... I think there's many, many ways to be an advocate” (I1, L632-634). Introverted advocacy is a quiet, individual approach to expressing support for LGBTQ+ communities.

**University.** All participants reported engaging in advocacy at the university level, whether as LGBTQ+ committee members, providing LGBTQ+ trainings, or holding events specifically for LGBTQ+ awareness. Sophia reported, “I am a member of pretty much everything LGBTQ that we have [at my university]” (I1, L487-488). Participants described advocating within the university setting at the classroom, department and university levels.

Sophia brings advocacy into the classroom and teaches her students to bring advocacy into other parts of their lives. She assigns a project titled “Little Acts of Advocacy” (I1, L389). Students are asked to advocate 15 times in little ways over the course of the semester. Sophia provided the following example:

It might be that I interrupt when one of my friends says something negative... It tends to really be things that are happening in their day-to-day life. So they're going to have a conversation with their mom about... Black Lives Matter... I try to encourage students to see advocacy as not just intervening when something goes wrong, but actually, sometimes doing things preemptively. (I1, L392-405)

Advocacy within the classroom then flows into advocacy in the community.

At the department level within the university setting, Rachel has colleagues who have been very supportive of her identity and who have reached out to her after the Supreme Court decision ruling federal marriage equality on June 26, 2015. Rachel stated, "I've had colleagues who've just, you know, straight allies who've just been really lovely about their emotion around it and we've had really wonderful conversation about that" (I1, L199-200). Rachel discussed colleagues supporting her identity and providing safety. Similarly, Bruce reported his department supports his transgender advocacy work despite student and regional resistance. He shared a recent experience of a transgender student who completed suicide. Within six weeks, Bruce had started an endowed scholarship for LGBTQ+ students. Bruce finds it important to provide support for LGBTQ+ students, especially in the South.

Other examples of advocacy within the university include Rachel starting a mentoring program for LGBTQ+ students, faculty and staff at a previous university where she worked. She reported being intentional with her advocacy as a mentor and described a ripple effect of impacting others outside of her immediate circle. Rachel intentionally provides LGBTQ+ competent mentorship with hopes of her mentees continuing to infuse LGBTQ+ competence. Similarly, Sophia advocates by providing

LGBTQ+ trainings on campus to encourage participants to continue advocating beyond the training, replicating the ripple effect. Sophia reported, “It’s about changing the climate... Levels upon levels” (I1, L503-514). Sophia’s passion for advocating for change at many levels is evident in both her work and way of being. Many participants advocate beyond the university level at the community level.

**Community.** Several participants discussed advocating at the community level. Mark reported starting a LGBTQ+ counseling program at a local domestic violence program. He volunteered pro-bono at the program for five years and then the program hired a part-time counselor to replace him when he moved. Mark reported, “I planted a seed there” (I1, L600). Similar to the ripple effect Rachel and Sophia discussed regarding advocacy within the university, Mark’s advocacy within the community continues to expand beyond his initial work within higher education responsibilities.

Other examples of community advocacy include LGBTQ+ resource centers, transgender inclusive health care group meetings, and being involved in training committees. Participants engage in LGBTQ+ advocacy with local schools. Rachel provides school trainings and Van trains counseling students to provide trainings at local schools. Further, Van initiated a community advocacy project allowing counseling students to provide safe spaces in local K-12 schools. These spaces are for LGBTQ+ youth to convene in a safe, protected environment. Counseling, advocacy, and research is done simultaneously through these projects. These examples further demonstrate the ripple effect of creating change beyond participant’s initial impact.

**National.** Several participants have advocated at the macro-level. The majority of participants have held leadership positions in ALGBTIC, the national LGBTQ+

counseling organization. Participants ranged from intentionally entering the counselor education profession with advocacy leadership at the national level at the forefront while others felt it emerged organically.

Many participants advocate with and on behalf of their self-identified community. For Bruce, he is passionate about advocating on behalf of the transgender community as a transgender man. He serves in a leadership position for a foundation providing grants to transgender people for gender affirmation surgeries. The majority of the advocacy work Bruce is involved in relates directly to his personal identity.

Mark has been involved in leadership positions with ACA, the National Board of Certified Counselors (NBCC), and ALGBTIC. Some positions are specific to LGBTQ+ advocacy roles whereas others are counselor education leadership roles. In both cases, Mark infuses LGBTQ+ advocacy throughout his experience as a leader.

Another example of national advocacy was demonstrated when Rachel fulfilled a leadership position with ALGBTIC. The national ACA convention was held in Canada where same-sex marriage was legal before marriage equality existed in the United States. As a leader with ALGBTIC, she provided same-sex couples the opportunity to wed on stage in front of ACA members. Rachel stated, “Why don’t we offer the opportunity for people to get married? It was so cool” (I1, L805-812).

All participants reported engaging in scholarly work at the national level, such as publishing within the Journal of LGBT Issues in Counseling (JLGBTIC) or other ACA journals. Further, participants have presented at various national counseling conferences, including the annual ACA conference, biannual ACES conference, and the biannual ALGBTIC conference. Several participants assisted with the ALGBTIC Transgender

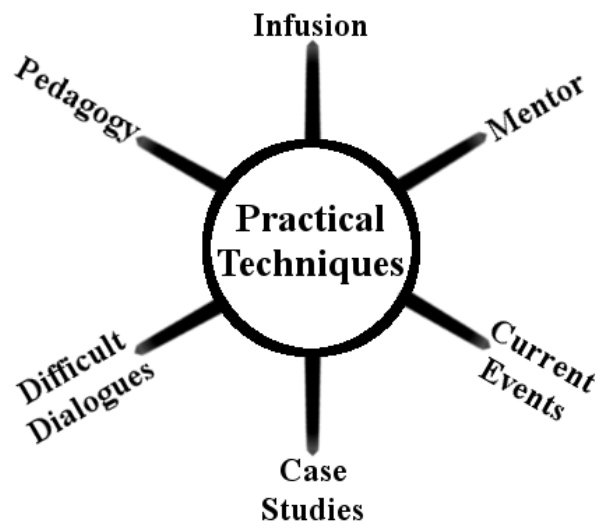


and LGBQQIA competencies (ALGBTIC, 2010; 2013). Van researches community advocacy projects as a way to impact national advocacy. Participants have demonstrated advocacy throughout their careers at the introverted, university, community, and national level.

### Practical Techniques

Throughout round one, participants reflected on specific techniques used in the classroom and supervision. *Practical Techniques* emerged as the sixth and final category for round one. Common practical thematic techniques include being a mentor, being out as LGBTQ+ or an ally, using current events and case studies, having difficult dialogues, similar pedagogical identities, and infusing LGBTQ+ competence throughout counselor education. Figure 4.70 is a visual of Practical Techniques Positional Map.

Figure 4.70. Practical Techniques Positional Map



**Mentor.** Participants identified the importance of mentorship throughout round one, especially due to their affectional orientation and/or gender identity. Being an out mentor was important to several participants. Zach reported identifying as a mentor for others, specifically as an out gay man. He stated, “People look up to me and identify me

as being queer in a positive way” (I1, L56). As an out transgender faculty member, Bruce identifies as being a mentor for transgender students. Bruce reported:

There's so many other things that trans people have to worry about, and completing their academic progress needs not to be a part of what they end up struggling around. I want the other issues in their life to be things that they have time and energy to attend to. (I1, L784-786)

Jack identifies as a mentor as well. He is drawn to the connection he experiences with mentees, and experiences mentorship to be very personal. He discussed not having children and instead having mentees to continue his legacy. Jack reported, “The fuller picture of understanding the isolation of my life with no kids, no progeny, these folks that I mentor... they're the only thing that's going to carry on for me” (ID1, L745-748).

Rachel and Sophia both reported mentoring students who approach them because they are out. Sophia stated, “[Some] queer students... really embrace having a faculty member who can help guide them and figure out what it means for them to be queer and a counselor” (I1, L792-793). Similarly, Van reported having more passion when mentoring students who identify as social justice advocates. Van reported, “It's more intentional in how I mentor them. I get more passionate because it's people that share the same passions as myself” (ID1, L22-23). Jack reported mentoring primarily heterosexual students yet being interested in mentoring LGBTQ+ students as well. He reported, “There's an instant kinship [mentoring LGBTQ+ students] that I don't feel with straight students for obvious reasons” (I1, L1045-1046). Participants are drawn towards mentoring students with similar identities as a result of personally relating to the students' experience.

**Out.** Every LGBTQ+ participant reported being out as a counselor educator. Participants illustrated the importance of being out in order to be a visible leader and model for students and colleagues. Even in more conservative, religious areas of the country, participants come out as LGBTQ+ to their students. A few participants spoke about the importance of students personally knowing an out LGBTQ+ person in order to humanize and normalize LGBTQ+ people. Jack stated, “All of the research shows that when you are in a close relationship with someone who is very different than you, everything changes... It changes everything about the trajectory of how they’re going to approach this issue in the future” (I1, L1055-1062).

Zach worked at a university in the South for one year before moving to the Southwest. He stated, “It was a town of less than 12,000 people. There are literally more cows than people there, and I knew it probably wouldn’t be the most affirmative environment” (I1, L455-456). Zach wasn’t certain about his safety with coming out, but on the first day of class, he realized some of his students might identify as LGBTQ+ and might be in the closet. Zach made a decision to come out. He stated, “I mentioned it casually during a lecture in one of my classes in the multicultural course... We were talking about power and privilege” (I1, L464-470). Zach self-disclosed in class that he identifies as having power as a White, able-bodied, cisgender male, yet lacking power for being gay. “You heard a little gasp in the room” (I1, L486). Despite the uncertainty of the response, Zach came out as a gay man in order to normalize to his students what a gay man looks like and to be a role model for those who identify as LGBTQ+.

Other participants reported coming out in similar ways in the classroom. Bruce reported coming out in multicultural counseling classes as a transgender man to help

explain gender to students. Bruce stated that students often respond with, “‘You’re what? You’re Trans-Am?’ ‘No, I’m not a car’” (I1, L575). Rachel also comes out in multicultural class during a privilege activity. She stated, “I do an exercise... that one where you stand or sit depending [on your privilege]... Sometimes I’m the only one standing and it’s okay” (I1, L185-190). Participants often use a social justice class activity as an opportunity to come out.

When Sophia first started teaching, she remembers agonizing over the coming out process. She kept thinking about how to come out over her first semester of teaching and had difficulty sleeping based on her anxiety. She reported, “I would be up all night the night before class thinking, ‘I’ve got to find a way to say this’” (I1, L272). Eventually, Sophia came out and made the decision to come out on the first day of class every semester.

Rachel reflects on the importance of coming out on behalf of LGBTQ+ students who may be in the closet or having difficulties with their identity. She stated, “I stand for the students who won’t stand. Because some of them don’t. This one student who came out to me later, she didn’t stand [in the classroom activity]. And I want everyone in the classroom to know what a gay person looks like” (I1, L208-211). Many participants identify as being out to provide support for students who are not out as a form of both advocacy and practical techniques as a counselor educator.

Many participants reflected on not having to come out as often as others based on assumptions. For example, Sophia stated, “Everybody already assumed that I was queer... It was just an automatic assumption” (I1, L263-263). Rachel had similar experiences based on her “pinked up and lavendered all colored up [vitae]” (I1, L630) as well as her

self-identified stereotypical physical appearance as a lesbian. While some participants experience surprised reactions from students when they come out, other participants are met with limited responses based on previous assumptions.

Jack relates the importance of coming out in multicultural classes. Jack stated, “Multiculturalism isn’t shit unless you’re willing to put yourself out there and apply it” (I1, L654). Jack highlights the important role for counselor educators to be out in order to be a role model for students. On the other hand, heterosexual counselor educators are in a position of power to increase equity by demonstrating support for LGBTQ+ people. For example, Van identifies as heterosexual and consistently uses gender neutral terminology when referring to his wife. Specifically, he refers to her as his “partner.” Van’s position of power as a heterosexual, cisgender ally provides the opportunity for him to support LGBTQ+ communities by outwardly demonstrating support and inclusion.

**Current events.** Incorporating current events in the classroom also emerged as a strong property under the category, *Practice Techniques*. Many participants referred to bringing current LGBTQ+ topics into the classroom and relating the topic to the counseling profession. Sophia stated:

Creating visibility, talking about current events, talking about Julea Ward. All of these things that come up impact how we do our work and what we’re doing...

You have to engage with what happens outside of the classroom in the classroom.  
(I1, L377-386)

Van infuses current events throughout the classes he teaches as well. Recently, Van had his students listen to the entire Supreme Court argument against marriage equality. After listening to the hearing, students engaged in a discussion and wrote about

how marriage equality influences them. The activity increased student self-awareness of personal values and beliefs, directly translating to their work as counselors.

Similarly, Mark incorporates an activity titled “Everyday Ethics” to integrate current events within ethics classes. He reported:

I have students in the class bring in an article that they found typically online, like it might be from CNN.com, or ESPN, or whatever, and we talk about the ethics around that... A student might bring in an article related to the Kim Davis case, so we might spend a few minutes talking about that. (I1, L448-454)

Kim Davis is a county clerk in Kentucky who defied a federal court order requiring marriage licenses to all couples, including same-sex couples. Davis denied same-sex couples marriage licenses based on her religious beliefs (Williams & Ortiz, 2015).

Examining current LGBTQ+ topics such as this increase students LGBTQ+ competence as counselors.

Participants discussed the importance of bringing current events examples to represent the classroom as a microcosm of the outside world. Participants reported providing students the opportunity to bring in events and relate the events specifically to counseling. This increases students’ understanding of self, the importance of advocacy, and how current events translate into clinical work as emerging counselors.

**Case studies.** Four out of seven participants reported using case studies with LGBTQ+ people in the classroom. Zach reported integrating case studies with different identities and multicultural backgrounds throughout all of the classes. Rachel discussed infusing case studies throughout all of her classes and encouraging her students to say the words “gay, lesbian, and bisexual” (I1, L867). Mark personalizes case studies by

infusing personal examples. He describes himself within case studies, and he describes his personal experiences when covering models of coming out. He shares with the class challenges he faced during this time as a demonstration of case studies.

Additionally, Mark finds it important to infuse case studies throughout all of the classes he teaches. When Mark teaches career counseling, he infuses examples of LGBTQ+ people. Mark reported, “If a counselor educator was teaching a career counseling class, he or she might want to infuse an example involving a case scenario involving a gay client and that struggle regarding coming out at work” (I1, L180-182).

As a queer, bisexual woman, Sophia reflects on the importance of advocating on behalf of bisexual people. She addresses biphobia and oppression bisexual people may experience by bringing in case studies with bisexual people to increase visibility. She stated, “There is a still a huge amount of invisibility around bisexuality... Bisexuals experience a lot more discrimination within the community than they do outside of it” (I1, L866-873). Case studies provide an opportunity for CITs to increase LGBTQ+ counseling competence.

**Difficult dialogues.** Several participants reported creating safe spaces in the classroom having challenging, probing dialogues. *Difficult Dialogues* emerged as a potent property under *Practical Techniques*. *Difficult Dialogues* can be defined as challenging, probing discussions with students in the classroom or in supervision. Jack reported being open and willing to engage in difficult discussions as a way to challenge students’ thinking and reflection. Jack reported, “It changes their whole training experience” (I1, L928-929). He reflected occasionally feeling uncomfortable during these discussions. As an out gay man with a deeply religious background, Jack is aware

of the internalized homophobia he occasionally experiences and consistently works to be present with students and not allow his values to impact the educational experience.

Mark reflected on probing students to think deeper when their personal values conflict with the counseling profession. For example, Mark provided an example of teaching the *Ward v. Wilbanks* case involving the counseling student who was dismissed from her counseling program because she refused to counsel with a gay client. Mark begins class with a lecture presenting the facts of the legal case and then poses questions regarding implications of the case. He takes a step back from a LGBTQ+ specific focus and places the lens on discrimination against marginalized groups in general. Mark reported:

Not only do we talk about the LGBT issue, but I broaden it to include... values, and how do we as counselors and counselors-in-training, how do we incorporate our values into our work and how do we not impose our values onto other people? (I1, L408-410)

In providing learning opportunities, Sophia engages classes by utilizing difficult dialogues as a teaching technique. She challenges students to consider how families are constructed and where assumptions come from regarding family units. Further, she challenges students to dissect their assumptions in order to change their frame of thinking.

**Pedagogy.** The majority of participants reported a feminist, humanistic, multicultural, social justice pedagogical lens. Specifically, Bruce reported his lens from a “feminist, multicultural, humanist perspective” (I1, L74-75) and Jack reported coming from an “existential humanist approach” (I1, L261). Van identifies as “liberation, social justice oriented” (I1, L508).



Many participants identify with feminist pedagogy. Jack stated, “I’m not going to... [hide] behind a façade of expertise” (I1, L275-276). Further, Jack reported using a seminar-style in the classroom by having inclusive class discussions around a big table. This highlights the egalitarian relationship between students and professor and reduces the power differential. Jack’s students call the seminar-style class “the big Thanksgiving table” (I1, L854). Jack facilitates his classes from an egalitarian approach and focuses on the process of safe, open learning.

Mark identifies as a constructivist and infuses humor and personal stories throughout his teaching, thus leading to egalitarian relationships with students. His theater background supports Mark’s spontaneity in the classroom and his love for role-playing. Oftentimes, Mark doesn’t warn students and will jump into a role-play, emulating the constructivist philosophy through interaction and activity.

**Infusion.** All participants reported infusing LGBTQ+ competence throughout the classroom. Jack specifically discussed infusing social justice competencies throughout all of the classes he teaches. He stated, “I try to infuse LGBTQ competency as part of a larger commitment to social justice competencies in all my classes” (I1, L575). Further, Jack stated, “I infuse LGBT issues... in different aspects of all of my classes” (I1, L123-125). Sophia also infuses LGBTQ+ competencies throughout all of the classes she teaches. She reported, “I try to infuse it throughout and provide different ways that it just gets dropped in here and there” (I1, L363-364). Van intentionally uses examples of same-sex partners to normalize LGBTQ+ relationships. Mark infuses LGBTQ+ competence throughout the classes he teaches as well. He reported, “I infuse [LGBTQ+ competence] in different aspects with all of my classes” (I1, L124-125).

Mark infuses the *ALGBTIC Transgender* and *ALGBTIC LGBQQIA Competencies* (2009; 2013) throughout counselor education. For Mark, LGBTQ+ competent counselor educators are familiar with the *ALGBTIC Competencies* (2009; 2013) and integrate LGBTQ+ competence within the classroom. He reported, “Even if they’re not exclusively teaching LGBT counseling courses, but infusing those kind of issues, regardless of what core counseling course is being taught” (I1, L175-177).

A few participants take infusion a step further through awareness of language used in the classroom. For example, one participant brought up intentionality behind how the discussion is facilitated. Intentionality of language infusion may lead to considering the classroom a microcosm of the outside world. Sophia stated, “I don't think that anything that's in the classroom ever is just in the classroom” (I1, L370-371). Given all participants infuse LGBTQ+ competence throughout counselor education, infusion is a key component to increase CITs LGBTQ+ competence.

## **Conclusion**

The first round of data collection led to in-depth, rich descriptions of participant’s process as LGBTQ+ competent counselor educators. As the researcher, my relationship with each participant is unique and continues to evolve during the research process, impacting the analysis of the research. Round one analysis led to the following categories: *Language, Discrimination, Resistance, Personal and Professional Self, Advocacy, and Practical Techniques*. Each category consisted of various properties. Round one included the situational questionnaire, interview, memo-writing, discourse analysis, and interpretive dialogue sessions. While the process of becoming LGBTQ+ competent counselor educators emerged from round one, further information is needed to

provide a more in-depth process of infusion across counselor education. The following chapter presents the data collection from the second interview, continuous memo-writing, discourse analysis, and the second and final interpretive dialogue pertaining to LGBTQ+ competency in counselor education.

## Chapter V

## Round Two Analysis

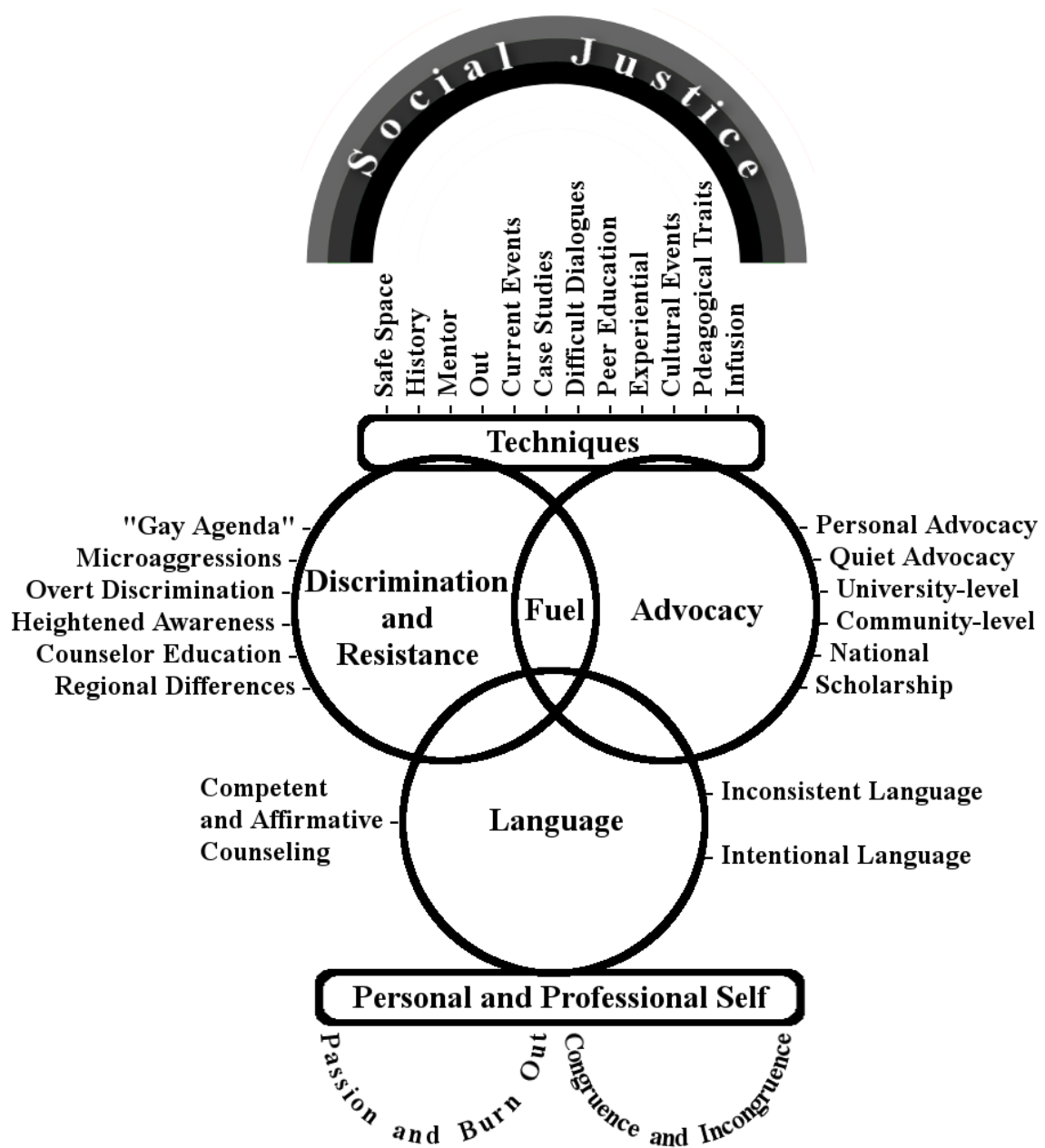
The current chapter presents the analysis of the second round of data, refining and confirming the emerging categories from round one. The emerging categories from round one include *Language*, *Discrimination*, *Resistance*, *Personal and Professional Self*, *Advocacy*, and *Practical Techniques*. The second round interview questions were formulated following gaps within each category from the first round. The questions included: (a) What is the role of language within LGBTQ+ competence?, (b) How has discrimination played a role in becoming LGBTQ+ competent?, (c) How has resistance impacted your level of LGBTQ+ competence?, (d) What role does advocacy play within counselor education?, (e) What are practical techniques you have applied throughout counselor education?, (f) What is the role of scholarship within LGBTQ+ competence in counselor education? The interview included follow-up questions to expand and increase meaning for the participant's response.

Memo-writing was continuous throughout the data collection. After the second round of interviews, discourse analysis included gathering materials based on the interviews. Interpretive dialogue sessions completed the final data collection from the second round. The audio recorded interviews and interpretive dialogue sessions were then transcribed and reviewed for accuracy to prepare for data analysis. Following initial and focused coding of the first round interviews, memo-writing, discourse analysis, and interpretive dialogues, mapping strategies resulted in the development of the project map below (Figure 5.10). Within interpretive dialogues, I reviewed with participants their

positions. Upon reflection of their own and others process, maps were further co-constructed and categories and properties further solidified.

Round two data collection emerged with five categories: (1) *Personal and Professional Self*; (2) *Language*; (3) *Discrimination and Resistance*; (4) *Advocacy*; and (5) *Techniques*. The main five categories stayed consistent with the first round, although *Discrimination and Resistance* merged into one category during the second round. Each category consists of various properties and dimensions. Figure 5.10 is a visual of Round Two LGBTQ+ Competent Project Map. As social justice was a main theme among all participants, social justice is seen as an overarching umbrella to include the entire project map.

Figure 5.10. Round Two LGBTQ+ Competent Project Map



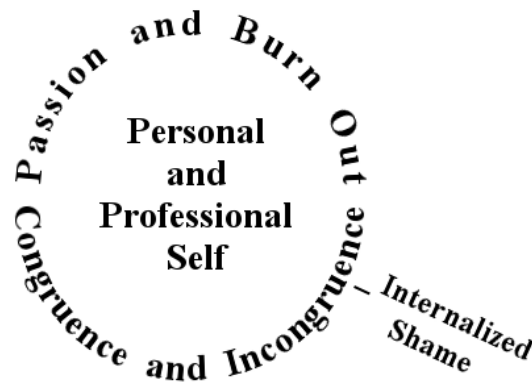
### Personal and Professional Self

*Personal and Professional Self* remained consistent as a category in round two analysis. *Personal and Professional Self* was moved to the first category because participants identify their personal and professional self to be the foundation for their

work as counselor educators. Sophia reported, “We can’t separate who we are in our profession” (I2, L702).

Similar to round one, participants identify as experiencing passion for their work as counselor educators as well as experiencing burnout. Further, some participants experience congruence while others experience incongruence with their personal and professional identities. Within incongruence, a few participants experience internalized shame. Properties of *Personal and Professional Self* include (1) *Passion*, (2) *Burnout*, (3) *Congruence*, and (4) *Incongruence*, along with *Internalized Shame* as a dimension. Figure 5.20 is the positional map of the round two category, *Personal and Professional Self*.

Figure 5.20. Personal and Professional Self Positional Map



**Passion.** Participants identify as being passionate in their work as LGBTQ+ competent counselor educators. Participants reflected on personal identity influencing their passion to be a change agent in addressing LGBTQ+ competence. Van reported, “[My identity as an ally] fuels everything I do... I don’t do anything unless it’s about social justice” (I2, L596-608).

Sophia has immense passion for LGBTQ+ competence in counselor education as a queer-identified educator. She reported:

As a counselor educator, I think being queer is a huge part of my role as an advocate, and why I feel like social justice is so important, and why it is my bread and butter and the stuff that wakes me up in the morning. (I2, L879-881)

As a gay man, Jack is also passionate about his work as a LGBTQ+ counselor educator. Jack's students are aware of his passion as well. He reported a student of his stated, "You're just so passionate about everything you do. You're so out-front. You give so much of yourself to everyone" (I2, L1009-1012). Jack's passion is palpable to his students.

Bruce's identity as a transgender man impacts his work of infusing LGBTQ+ competence in the classroom, scholarship, and advocacy. His identity is transparent in all aspects of his life. Bruce reported, "I don't experience discrepancy [personally and professionally]. I don't closet myself. My clients know I'm trans, my students know I'm trans, my bosses know I'm trans, the university administration knows I'm trans" (I2, L602-605). Bruce doesn't acknowledge his identity as a transgender man fueling his passion and instead finds his identity as a social justice advocate to fuel his passion for equality. He stated, "I just really believe that people deserve a level playing field, and all people deserve basic human rights... The issue that's closest to home for me is around the ways that trans-people [deserve equality]" (I2, L667-680). As an educator, Bruce shares his personal experiences of oppression with his students. He stated, "I list it off: I can be fired from my job, I can be evicted from my home, I can be denied credit, I can be denied public accommodation, and I have no legal recourse" (I2, L690-692). Bruce's passion for social justice, in the form of LGBTQ+ competence, strikes close to home



given his personal experiences, which he shares with his students in order to increase their understanding of the oppression and discrimination LGBTQ+ communities face.

As a gay man, Zach is also passionate as a social justice advocate, specifically for his work as a LGBTQ+ competent counselor educator. This is shown by his numerous LGBTQ+ publications and leadership positions in professional organizations promoting LGBTQ+ competence. Zach stated, “I see social justice as an underlying cause of my work” (I2, L597-598).

Similarly, Rachel has “made a good career of being queer” (I2, L500). Her personal identity as an out lesbian aligns with her work as a counselor educator. Rachel reported, “I chose a good profession that lets me live out my personal passion” (I2, L503-504).

Mark exhibits passion in his work as a gay counselor educator. His dissertation focused on gay men social networks, which was congruent with his personal experience as a gay doctoral student. Mark reported, “My own personal passions translate into my professional passions” (I2, L625-626).

**Burnout.** While all participants experience passion for LGBTQ+ issues on both a personal and professional level, participants also indicate experiencing burnout. Van reported, “The flip side of passion is feeling burnout because you see the negatives. You see what’s wrong with the world, and when you see what’s wrong with the world, it’s hard to be positive” (I2, L643-645). Many participants identify with burnout despite their passion.

Rachel experiences burnout in counselor education when she witnesses non-affirming LGBTQ+ discussions. Rachel reported recently on a counselor education

listserv there was a discussion on whether or not marriage equality is important. She stated, “Every year, there’s a conversation [among counselor educators] about whether gay people are okay or not... It’s a tired conversation. And it’s counselor educators [saying this]!” (I2, L510-563). When Rachel experiences burnout, she feels the need to process with friends and her partner to recover. Rachel stated, “I just kind of rant a little bit and I contact a friend or two saying, ‘Oh my god, I can’t believe we’re doing this again!’” (I2, L581-582).

Many participants reported working more hours than their colleagues, which may contribute to burnout. Sophia reported, “You’re willing to do the work because you have a passion for it, but you end up working a lot more hours than everybody around you. I serve on more committees than anyone in my department” (ID2, L326-330). Similarly, Van experiences burnout as the marginalized faculty member in his department where he experiences sole responsibility to teach diversity competence to students. Van reported, “It gets tiring. There’s day[s] where I don’t want to do anything with it. Or, there’s days when I sit in my office and I just shut the door...” (I1, L419-421).

When Van experiences burnout, he finds himself “tired” and feeling “disenfranchised” (I2, L628). He reported:

It impacts my mood if that’s a bad day or I see something, an injustice, I get impacted. It hinders my ability to be the type of husband I want to be. It hinders my ability to be the father I want to be. When I teach the social justice class or the diversity class, it takes longer for me to recover. Whereas if I teach the other type of content class, I don’t get emotionally attached to it and stuff. So those nights I teach that class, it’s hard for me to come home because I’m down. So I

have to, sometimes, I'll sit in the garage and give myself a moment to collect myself. Because, for me, sometimes when I teach those classes, I'm like, "Wow, the world is really fucked up and these [students] are the future of our field." (I2, L628-638)

When Sophia feels burned out, she begins questioning herself and internalized shame rises. She reported:

Sometimes it'll hit me at a time that I'm not expecting it or just not prepared for it or at a time when I'm hearing it from other places too, or where I'm feeling a lot of internalized stuff, and then it just increases that feeling within myself of like maybe there is something wrong with me. (I2, L662-665)

Some participants identify as lacking boundaries around burnout while others are strict with boundaries to avoid burnout. Zach identifies lacking boundaries around his work and reported, "I wake up every morning around 4:30 and don't go to bed until 10:00, and I spend most of my day working" (I2, L639-640). Zach occasionally feels overwhelmed and stressed based on his rigorous schedule. On the other hand, Jack has strong boundaries with self-care. He reported, "I'm very strict and I don't work over my 40 hours a week unless it's something special" (I2, L1048). Last year, Jack experienced a demanding year where he was asked to work above and beyond. He spoke to his dean indicating, "I will not have a second year like this. These are the boundaries" (I2, L1098-1099).

Van identifies as a social change agent who "can't shut it off" (I2, L331). This leads to burnout. Van reported:

I wake up, that's how I see and experience the world. I go to bed, that's how I see and experience the world. It's a part of me... It's why I get so upset or why I get so burned out because it's so emotional, and it's emotional because it's so much a part of my inner core. (I2, L331-338)

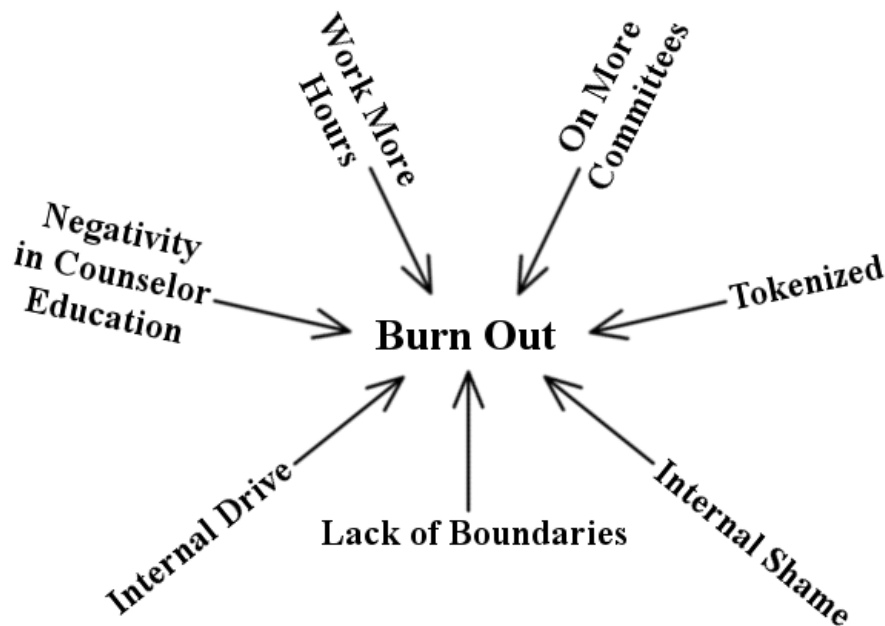
Some participants identify as having an internal pressure to succeed as a marginalized individual. Zach reported:

I do think there is this internal push that some of us have, who identify as queer or from culturally marginalized backgrounds, because we have to show people that we do have this competence that we do have this skill that we're worthy to be at the table. And, sometimes, we overextend ourselves to prove our worth... Some people will never see our worth because of stereotypes of marginalization. (I2, L659-664)

Participants reduce burnout in a number of ways. Sophia surrounds herself with affirmative people and places. She stated, "I have to replace that with being in affirmative spaces or being around my community or finding ways to feel empowered in my identity, because if I'm only in those negative spaces then it can have a really big toll" (I2, L689-691). Rachel maintains boundaries by recognizing when to stop. She reported, "you learn which battles to fight and which ones you know you can't and I know that if I don't do that fight, I know someone else will do it. So I don't worry about that" (ID2, L546-548). Jack also maintains boundaries by reducing engagement in non-affirming venues. Specifically, Jack is not on the counselor educator listserv anymore. This limits the negative environment expressed by other participants from the listserv.

Figure 5.21 is a visual of the positionality of burnout as experienced by participants. The map demonstrates various factors impacting burnout, including working more hours than colleagues, being on more committees than colleagues, negative environments within the counselor education field, being tokenized, experiencing internalized shame, having a lack of boundaries, and having an internal drive based on marginalized identity.

Figure 5.21. Burnout Positional Map



**Congruence.** The third subcategory under the category, *Professional and Personal Self*, is *Congruence*. Some participant's religious or spiritual identity aligns within their identity as an LGBTQ+ counselor educator. Mark experiences congruence with his personal identity as gay, counselor educator, and Roman Catholic, yet recognizes the Roman Catholic Church, as an institution, does not accept LGBTQ+ people. Mark finds hope with the current Pope Francis' inclusion of gay and lesbian people. He stated, "Pope Francis is more progressive on that issue and he made that famous statement when

he was first elected Pope. When a reporter asked him about gay people and he said, ‘Who am I to judge?’” (I2, L124-126). The statement from the Pope provided Mark with much relief and hope.

As a gay spiritual Catholic, Zach reported picking and choosing parts of Catholicism that align with his affectional orientation. He stated, “[I] accept the parts that I wanted to of [Catholicism] and then just being who I was and who I wanted to be” (I2, L535-536). While Zach has found congruence between his identity as a gay spiritual Catholic, he recognizes that others have difficulties with the congruence of these parts of himself. Zach reported, “I feel like it’s incongruent with their schemas... It’s harder for them to understand” (I2, L543-565).

Other participants find congruence with their personal values and the counseling profession’s values. For example, Van identifies as living his life as a social justice advocate both within the counseling profession and outside. He stated, “If I wasn’t a counselor educator, I’d be [a social justice advocate] as an accountant, I’d be doing it if I was flipping burgers” (I2, L329-330). Rachel identifies with this as well. She finds her personal values and the counseling profession’s values are congruent.

**Incongruence.** On the other hand, many participants experience *Incongruence* with their personal and professional self. For some participants, the incongruence is related to their religious or spiritual identity. Despite feeling congruence between his personal and professional identity as a social justice advocate, Van has difficulty finding congruence as a heterosexual, cisgender ally and Christian. Van stated, “I feel discrimination from the church. I’m a Christian, but I don’t attend church because I have

yet to find a church that speaks to me, spiritually, and then, also to my allyship values and beliefs” (I2, L257-259).

Similarly, Jack has experienced discrimination from the Catholic Church, stating, “The overwhelming majority of [instances] where I feel like I was discriminated against because I was gay, literally could almost be completely contained within my experience with church” (I2, L212-214). This leads Jack to feeling incongruent with his identity as a gay male and Catholic. Jack continued, “I’ve been very wounded by this, and I have to work very hard to overcome my prejudicial feelings of people of faith because of that. That’s almost always spoken in the same breath” (I2, L9330935).

Sophia has a similar experience of her spiritual life being disconnected from the rest of her personhood. She reported, “The place where my identities don’t show up, is my spirituality” (I2, L725). Sophia identifies with a sacred, protective Native American spirituality.

While Zach finds his religious identity to be congruent with counselor education, he experiences not fitting in due to his young age. Zach reported, “I’m the new kid on the block, or they see me as someone who’s very young and not as capable or willing to stand strong” (I1, L694-695). Zach experiences incongruence based on his youthful appearance and young age.

Jack also experiences incongruence in his life and finds himself to be “two completely different people” (I2, L856). In his personal life, Jack is quiet and “not a showy guy” (I2, 874) whereas in his professional life, he’s the “go-to guy” (I2, L884) on LGBTQ+ topics. Jack stated, “I feel like I live professionally in Technicolor Dolby stereo, and I come home and have this monk’s life” (I2, L958-959). The contrast in

Jack's life is palpable. "I feel like I have a very quiet, unknown life, experiencing my gayness outside of work. Whereas in work, I'm the go-to guy... I'm out to everyone. It comes up often" (I2, L883-885).

***Internalized shame.*** A few participants reported identifying with *Internalized Shame*, defined by participants as the experience of feeling inward shame based on participant's LGBTQ+ identity. While all participants are out advocates who are leaders in the field of counselor education, a few of them still experience occasional internalized shame. For example, Sophia reported experiencing internalized biphobia when she experiences resistance in counselor education. Sophia stated:

It can be heavy to carry around, and then it can make me less effective... Either [I] want to not even address it because it feels too big or that kind of thing, or just to feel alone in it, or, you know. I think there's a lot of ways it can create an impasse. (I2, L598-603)

Mark reflected on discriminatory experiences as a high school student. He reported, "My freshman year somebody wrote fag on my locker and I was teased... Just hearing myself talk about it, I think there's a little bit of shame there some thirty years later" (ID2, L178-193). This experience has influenced Mark as a previous school counselor and currently as a counselor educator by bringing in the invisible oppression LGBTQ+ people encounter.

Jack also identifies with internalized shame. Occasionally, his shame impacts his work due to concern and worry. Jack reported, "I think that the internalized shame is so profound in me, that I am constantly worried if there's any kind of tension at all, it's because I'm gay" (I2, L562-564). In order to reduce his worry, Jack is transparent and



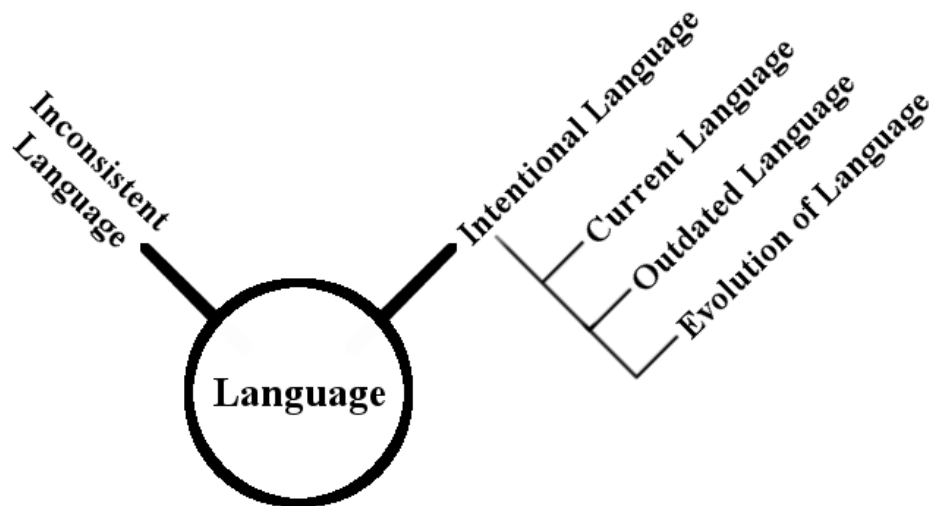
checks in with those around him, stating, “If there’s ever anything that makes you uncomfortable, please let me know” (I2, L582-583).

## Language

*Language* has strengthened as a central category during round two data collection and analysis. Participants reflected on the significance of language impacting one’s worldview. Zach reflected, “Language is the operational frame that we utilize to convey to others how we view the world” (ID2, 286-287). Rachel reported, “Language... represents my perception of the world and what words I use is my interpretation” (ID2, L36-37). Jack identifies with a similar perspective, stating, “It’s what makes the world go round... The power of language can be truth about our lived experiences” (ID2, L58-63).

Participants reflected on language as the foundation for LGBTQ+ competence to connect with clients. Similar to round one, the perspectives behind LGBTQ+ competent counseling and LGBTQ+ affirmative counseling remained, therefore the property *Competent and Affirmative Counseling* stayed. *Competent and Affirmative Counseling* is the foundational piece for the current study and recognizes each participant has a different interpretation of language. *Competent and Affirmative Counseling* is central to the research and is visually shown as the base. Further, the properties of *Inconsistent Language* and *Intentional Language* strengthened and also remained. New dimensions emerged under *Intentional Language*, specifically (1) *Current Language*, (2) *Outdated Language*, and (3) *Evolution of Language*. Figure 5.30 is a visual of the category, *Language*.

Figure 5.30. Language Positional Map



### Competent and Affirmative Counseling

**Competent and affirmative counseling.** Similar to round one analysis, participants confirmed various perspectives on LGBTQ+ competent counseling and LGBTQ+ affirmative counseling. During round one data analysis, participants experienced LGBTQ+ competent counseling as focused on the *ALBTIC Transgender Competencies* (2009) and the *ALBTIC LGBQQIA Competencies* (2013). Further, participants found LGBTQ+ competent counseling to focus on awareness, knowledge, and skills. On the other hand, participants believed LGBTQ+ affirmative counseling focuses on the counseling relationship. They varied in perspective whether affirmative counseling is a step towards or beyond competent counseling. There was limited new data to include in this property during round two analysis. Mark wondered if there should be a LGBTQ+ competent counselor certificate, stating, “I think it could only be a benefit” (ID2, L638). Other participants view LGBTQ+ competence as constantly evolving and growing, therefore it would be difficult to certify with an official “competent” certificate. Mark reflected on states not requiring clinicians to complete a

certain amount of LGBTQ+ continuing education units, and reported, “If clinicians decided to go to an LGBT workshop for their continuing ed, [we’d have more competent counselors]” (ID2, L715-716). Despite different ways of conceptualizing competent and affirmative counseling, all participants find language to be an important component of LGBTQ+ competence.

**Inconsistent language.** The property, *Inconsistent Language*, remained and strengthened during round two analysis. Participants find language to be important, and even, according to Van, “empowering” (ID2, L65). Yet, similar to round one analysis, round two analysis demonstrated the continued use of inconsistent language among participants. All participants described the importance of using consistent language, yet language varied among participants. This may confuse students, as described by Zach: “[Inconsistent language] confuses people and it makes it hard to really teach them how to use appropriate language because there’s not that type of modeling” (I2, L120-121). Bruce agrees with this, adding, “What ends up happening is that students get confused” (I2, L181). Bruce elaborated by discussing how students who hear different language may become confused as to what is the most appropriate language to use. Further, Mark finds long acronyms used to define LGBTQ+ communities can distance people. He reported, “I think when we start getting into LGBTQQIA kind of stuff, I think people are confused by it... It alienates people in the majority culture” (I2, L244-264).

Participants used slightly different language from one another. For example, Jack discussed using “lesbian” less and less. He reported, “It seems to me that ‘lesbian’ is falling by the wayside. Even gay women are starting to use the term ‘gay’ as kind of an umbrella circle” (I2, L98-100). Similarly, Mark reported, “I would think if we're talking

to a 15-year-old young woman, I think she's more inclined to use the word 'queer' than saying 'Oh, I'm a lesbian'" (I2, L294-296). On the other hand, Jack reported lesbian and gay women to be using the term 'lesbian' more often as a form of not buying into the patriarchy.

Another inconsistent term used is "same-sex attraction." Six out of seven participants did not use the term, yet Jack uses it often, stating, "It's more inclusively talking about people who may be open to same-sex sexual experiences and intimacies, but don't necessarily identify themselves as gay" (I2, L113-119).

Further, some participants use the term "queer" frequently and comfortably, whereas other participants are uncomfortable with it. Mark reported feeling uncomfortable with it based on the history of negativity. He stated, "I would never identify as queer because to me, the word queer has negative connotations" (I2, L201-202). Jack reflects on the importance of being aware of the impact of language, such as with the word "queer." He stated, "What is the impact of the term 'queer' or 'cisgender'?" (ID2, L76-77). Despite using different language, participants recognized the impact language has on students and find it important to acknowledge this impact.

**Intentional language.** *Intentional Language* was an emerging property in round one analysis, and became a very strong, central property during round two. Participants shared understanding of the importance of counselor educators using LGBTQ+ affirming language intentionally throughout counselor education. Zach reflected on being mindful of language being used and interpreted across counselor education. He asked, "How are we constructing language? How is language being used in the classroom by all the participants, students, teachers, and otherwise?" (I2, L48-50). Jack reported introducing

terminology in an inclusive way in the classroom. Jack provides safe learning opportunities for students to deconstruct language from their lens. He stated, “I don’t like that idea of immediately correcting [students], getting all defensive about it, because I think all that does is shame them, and it shuts down the learning process” (I2, L74-80). Instead, Jack provides safe spaces for students to use language they are familiar with and then challenging students to understand the history and origins of the language while informing students of current, inclusive language to use. Three dimensions of *Intentional Language* emerged from round two analysis, including (1) *Current language*, (2) *Outdated language*, and (3) *Evolution of language*.

***Current language.*** Participants believed current, appropriate language is important to use within counseling and counselor education. Van stated, “If you’re not using appropriate language, what’s the point?” (I2, L208-209). Sophia finds using current, competent language is important because it lets clients and students know whether you are LGBTQ+ competent. Sophia reported,

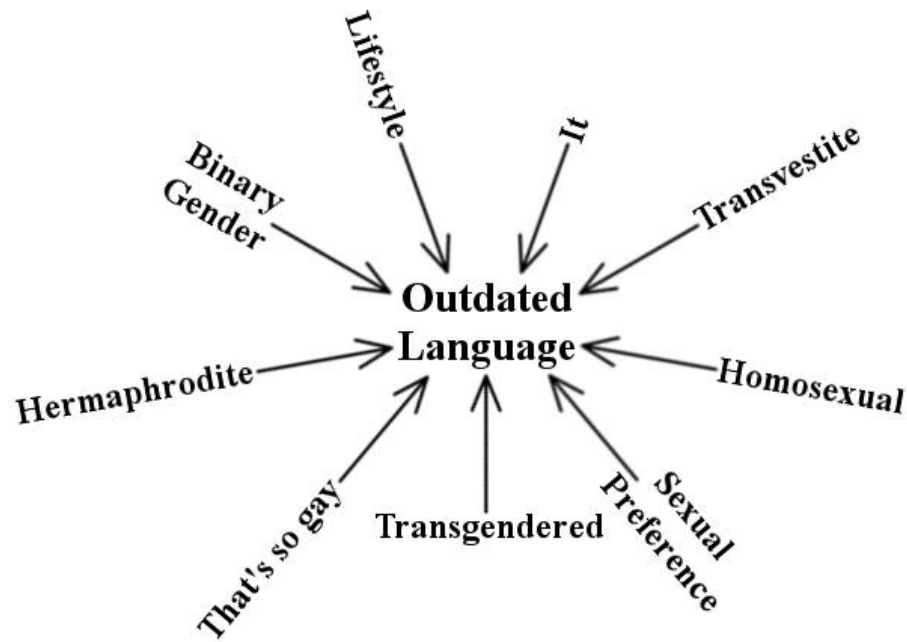
Language is the first way that people are clued in to whether or not you are competent... You're sitting with someone and they say the wrong thing, even well intentioned, it tells you right away, like, they don't know what they're talking about. (ID2, L67-71)

Participants find importance with modeling LGBTQ+ current, competent language for students. Van stated, “I bring [language] to the classes, in terms of talking about using appropriate language. Like, the importance of using preferred gender pronouns, the importance of using inclusive language” (I2, L48-50). While some participants reported no difficulties with recognizing appropriate language and

inappropriate language, other participants reflected on the vagueness of appropriate language. For example, participants had various responses regarding the term queer. Van reported, “Students want to know the answers, and they want to know, what’s the right answer. Do I use queer? Do I not use queer? What’s hard is when students hear me say, ‘Well, it depends’” (I2, L164-167). Bruce learns about current, appropriate language directly from the community. He stated, “I learn what people find affirmative for them” (I2, L205).

Van wrote a chapter in a book specifically on appropriate language for multicultural populations. He requires students read the chapter in order to increase awareness of the power of language. Van stated the most important piece of the chapter is, “Call people what they want to be referred to as... Also, what’s appropriate in society? You want to balance the two” (I2, L65-67). Participants use current language throughout counselor education in order to demonstrate competence for their students.

***Outdated language.*** Participants had seemingly endless examples of outdated, inappropriate language, including “homosexual” (Sophia, I2, L288), “sexual preference” (Mark, I2, L189; Rachel, I2, L42), “transgendered” (Rachel, I2, L117), “That’s so gay” (Zach, ID2, L307), “transvestite” (Sophia, I2, L299), “hermaphrodite” (Rachel, I2, L125), “lifestyle” (Michael, ID2, L50; Rachel, I2, L42; Van, I2, L41), and “it” (Bruce, I2, L41). Figure 5.31 is a positional map of language participant’s identify as outdated.

*Figure 5.31. Outdated Language Positional Map*

Sophia does not feel safe with those who use outdated language. She reported, “If the person’s only familiar with very mainstream, old, outdated terms, then that tells me that person is not safe” (I2, L282-283). Similarly, Rachel finds the use of outdated language to demonstrate a lack of competence. Rachel reported:

If [counselor educators or counselors are] using language like “preference” or they use the word “homosexual” or “lifestyle”, it’s still, to me, means that they have work to do on becoming competent and it usually communicates to me their knowledge or attitude and awareness deficits. (I2, L47-50)

According to participants, LGBTQ+ competent counselor educators inform students and colleagues of the appropriate language to use. Zach stated, “[LGBTQ+ competent counselor educators] make sure that the materials being used are the most up-to-date language” (I2, L52-53). Rachel adds, “I’m constantly correcting students’ language so they can see how language can be pejorative” (I2, L60-61). LGBTQ+

competent counselor educators are aware of the importance of appropriate language. As Van stated, “If you use the wrong language it can mean, basically, the end of counseling with a particular client” (I2, L37-38).

All participants identify the term “homosexual” as outdated. Jack reported, “Homosexual basically is almost a derogatory clinical term... It hearkened back to the diagnostic, the DSM pre-1973” (I2, L276-277). Rachel adds to the derogatory nature of the word “homosexual”: “I let [students] know that [‘homosexual’] is an old term and it really reduces a person’s identity... to the sexual piece” (I2, L87-89). Sophia adds, “It’s very medicalized... It’s like a behavioral term” (I2, L290-291). Participants strongly identify the word “homosexual” to be outdated.

Jack finds the term “homophobia” to also be outdated. For Jack, homophobia has roots in homosexual, a term he finds inappropriate. Further, he reported, “Homophobia implies a phobia. It implies an entire dimension of disorder, that they’re phobic in their conception of a gay or lesbian person” (I2, L285-286). Jack believes people cannot have phobia of an entire population of people and instead may hold values opposing the behaviors of LGBTQ+ people.

Zach described an example of a student stating, “That’s so gay” (ID2, L307). As the instructor of the class, Zach intentionally unpacked the meaning behind the statement. He does this by talking openly with students to explore all the meanings behind the phrase. Zach approached the situation from an educational stance in order to not shame the student, and invited the student to increase awareness regarding their possible unconscious bias. Other students in the class benefited from the situation by increasing



awareness of personal biases and the impact of inappropriate language. Zach continued by asking students:

Are there any situations, from your life, where you feel like someone might have minimized you? If so, can you give me that example? Can you tell me more about your feelings and thoughts? Can you see how that relates in some ways? (ID2, L332-334)

Bruce was providing consultation services for a counselor working with a transgender client. The counselor referred to the client as “it.” Bruce found the experience dehumanizing and responded with, “Are you kidding me? You’re treating them as if they aren’t human” (I2, L54-57). Bruce advocates on behalf of the transgender community and provides education around the inappropriateness of specific language when referring to transgender individuals.

Bruce once corrected a colleague who said, “People with a sex[ual] orientation are lesbian, gay or bisexual” (I2, L140). Bruce corrected her by saying, “No, everybody has a sexual orientation” (I2, L141). Sexual orientation includes heterosexuality and asexuality. Bruce feels comfortable correcting people who use outdated, inappropriate language.

Some students use the outdated term “transgendered” instead of “transgender.” Rachel reported, “I let students know the correct terminology is ‘transgender.’ People are not done, like it’s not an action or something” (I2, L117-119). Using the past tense, “transgendered,” is considered inappropriate and outdated.

Another term participants considered outdated is “hermaphrodite.” When Rachel hears this, she reports, “I’ll just correct them and say, ‘I think you mean [intersex].’ This

is the right terminology to use. Here's a link to help educate you" (I2, L125-127).

"Hermaphrodite" was previously used when referring to ambiguous genitalia, and is now considered stigmatizing.

Participants found binary gendered language to be a limitation. Sophia believes counselor educators need to be aware of limitations of binary language, and educate students on these limitations. She finds the gender binary system to be outdated and an area of need to increase competence. Sophia stated, "I don't think counselor educators are regularly even asking people pronouns... There's a lot of things that we're not doing that are really simple first steps [towards competence]" (I2, L530-532). Bruce finds students tend to use "she" and "him" in class papers instead of using gender-neutral language. Bruce stated:

The time when I get most concerned about language is in reading students' writing, so they're definitely committed to the gender binary... They would say something like, "A counselor should be mindful in working with his or her clients." And I'm like, "Why can't you say a counselor should be mindful when working with clients"? ... [And,] why do men come first in that? That's our patriarchal society. (I2, L219-237)

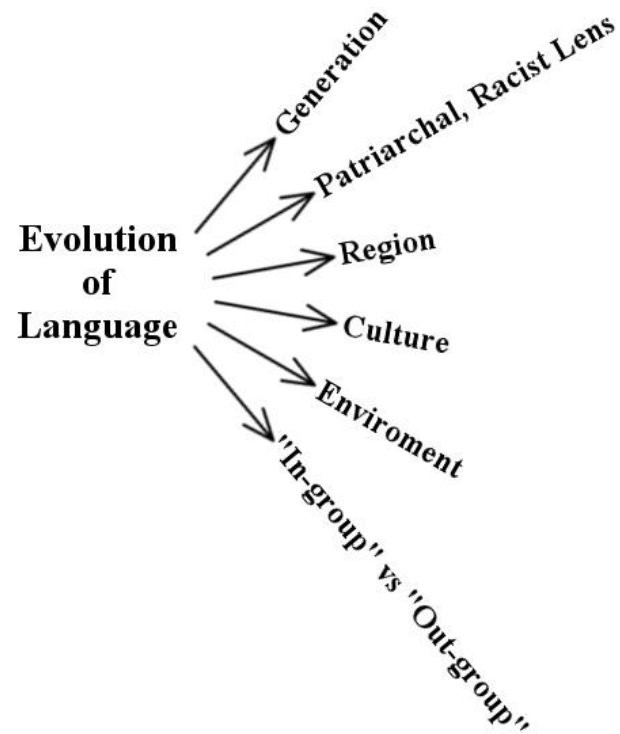
As an instructor, Bruce shares with students the importance of using gender-neutral pronouns when possible. He increases the discussion of gender and how binary language may affect clients. Jack uses gender-neutral language throughout counselor education as well. He reported, "I, across the board, use the term 'partner... I really try to teach my students to do that because it isn't just same-sex couples. It's co-habiting heterosexual couples that don't want anything to do with marriage either" (I2, L423-429).

Similarly, Sophia facilitates entire lessons on language. She reported:

We talk about what language is outdated, what language is okay... We talk about how to find out what someone's pronouns are... I also try to model it. When I hear language that's problematic, I challenge it. I try to do it in a way that's not stigmatizing for the student or the person saying it because I also don't want to lock students up around their language. (I2, L310-317)

Jack also is intentional with his language in the classroom. He believes it is important to model the appropriate use of language for his students. Jack stated, "I try to be precise with my language because I'm trying to model what I believe the community is advocating for" (I2, L52-54).

***Evolution of language.*** The third dimension under the property, *Intentional Language*, is *Evolution of Language*. LGBTQ+ language evolves and differs based on various factors, including culture, intersectionality, environmental context, region, and generation. According to participants, language changes based on a number of factors. Van stated, "Language is always changing... Changing, in the sense of what we use today becomes obsolete tomorrow" (I2, L52-53). Jack finds language to be changing "with the context of time, constituency, culture, region. It's always changing" (ID2, L139). Bruce adds, "You must be nimble. Able to roll with the changes that clients, students, research participants are bringing you" (I2, L280-281). The following positional map (Figure 5.32) shows factors participants identify as impacting the evolution of language.

*Figure 5.32. Evolution of Language Positional Map*

Language has changed since Jack started the counseling profession. He stated:

When I first got into this, it was GLBT. Then we recognized male privilege [and switched to LGBT]... When I took my first professorship, and all the younger LGBT folks were adding Q+... I had to get caught up on that. (I2, L58-65)

Participants reflected on the impact of environment on language. Van discussed the culture of the environment one lives in to be core features impacting one's language.

Further, Van stated:

Community norms and values that are embedded in society influence the language people use. If you live in a very homophobic community, that's going to influence the language you use and more likely see more derogatory language towards LGBT communities and individuals. Versus, if you lived in a community where the values of openness, and fairness, and self-respect are valued, you're

more likely to see more positive empowerment language used... It's very much a part of a fabric of a community. I think that influences people a lot, in terms of shaping the types of language people use. (I2, L126-135)

Similarly, participants are aware of patriarchal, racist values influencing language. Rachel stated, "I've had some White gay male students who are pretty focused on the gay White male community and they might not always be inclusive of lesbians and gender" (I2, L263-265). Participants intentionally challenge students' patriarchal, racist perspectives of language. For example, Bruce finds White LGBTQ+ people to use White-centric language and not be aware of the intersectionality of identities within LGBTQ+ populations. He was helping put LGBTQ+ terminology on a website and reported:

I said, "You need to include some cultural terms that are used for gender queer individuals from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds." [The current words included] gender queer, gender nonconforming, gender non-binary, and I'm like, "Well, where's things like stud?" that come from the African American community and other identity labels like that. I'm like, "This is not going to fly." [I2, L283-288]

Bruce is an advocate for highlighting the various interpretations of language and positions of intersectionality within language. Appropriate language can be difficult to pinpoint based on the various understandings and interpretations of language and intersectionality of identities. Bruce finds language to be different in the South versus other regions. He reported, "I can be really behind the times especially around trans

affirmative language because it is changing so much, and probably not as quickly in [the South] as it is in bigger cities” (I2, L201-204).

Further, Rachel also intentionally considers cultural and regional differences with language. She reported, “I’ve had students from Africa... stumble over [language]. They’ll use the word ‘homosexual’ often” (I2, L254-258). Sophia also recognizes regional differences. She reported, “When I lived in [the South] queer meant something very different than what it means in the Midwest” (I2, L399-400). Participants acknowledge the differences of language based on culture and region.

Participants reported generational differences with language. Participants identify young people to be the creators of new, emerging language. Zach reported, “[Young people] tend to be the most up-to-date in the cutting edge, probably because they’re creating some of the terms” (I2, L104-105). Rachel has similar experiences, stating, “I find some of the younger students are a little more savvy [with language]” (I2, L280). Recently, Zach was conversing with colleagues who work with LGBTQ+ youth. His colleague was leading a LGBTQ+ youth group and stated, “I asked the youth to share their preferred gender pronouns, and they had this strong reaction because they viewed the word ‘preferred’ to state choice” (ID2, L360). The youth view the phrase “preferred gender pronoun” to indicate preference instead of being innate. Zach reflected on the difficulty of balancing affirmative language and not attacking those who are not aware of the most current, LGBTQ+ competent language. Affirmative, LGBTQ+ competent language varies based on many factors, including age.

In her late 30s, Sophia identifies as a polysexual, demisexual, non-monogamous, queer, bisexual cisgender woman. She acknowledges her identity to be fluid and

changing as the LGBTQ+ community evolves. Sophia identifies less and less as bisexual stating, “for me, [bisexual] fits less and less because it still feels very binary in some ways” (I2, L86-87). Further, Sophia recognizes younger people are beginning to not identify as bisexual anymore based on the binary implications. She stated, “The word bisexual has a lot less social currency in the younger generations than it did now or before” (I2, L443). Sophia relates to polysexual because of “the idea of being attracted to multiple genders” (I2, L70-71). She finds importance in not conforming to binary systems of thinking.

While Sophia remains current with the evolution of LGBTQ+ language in her personal life, some participants experience personal barriers with language. Jack, who is in his late 40s, reported, “I’m of a different generation. I’m realizing I’m kind of behind and trying to catch up” (I2, L37-38). Similarly, Mark reported, “I don’t like when I hear people say [queer]. But I think it’s just because I’m old-school and I know that young adults and teenagers today will often identify as queer because it’s more fluid and that’s fine” (I2, L198-201). Mark recognizes “queer” as a term of empowerment for many people, yet the negative connotations are vivid in his mind.

Participants have different perspectives about similarities and differences between “queer” and “the n-word” (Bruce, ID2, L358) sometimes used in the African American community. Bruce reported, “I don’t think there’s the same kind of history around queer as there is around the n-word because of the slavery era that existed in our country” (ID2, L357-359). Mark finds both the “n-word” (ID2, L146) and “fag” (ID2, L147) to be similar because he identifies them as “in-group” terms. Mark reported:

I, as a White man, I don't have a say over how an African American should or should not use the n-word. Just as a straight man does not have the right to tell me whether I should or should not use the term fag. (ID2, L144-147)

Mark believes communities should be able to use whatever language they identify with, otherwise known as “in-group.” He thinks people who don’t identify with the community should not use the language, known as “out-group.” Specifically, Mark finds people who identify as LGBTQ+ (or “in-group”) to be able to use the term queer.

Bruce, in his mid 50s, finds himself having a difficult time connecting with younger LGBTQ+ people. He reported:

I think it will be harder for me to communicate with people who are two generations away from me than those who are on either side of me. It's like I can communicate with my mother and her cohort of people because I've talked to them all my life. And I can communicate with my sister's children and that cohort because I've talked to them all of their life. But when you get a step further away, I think you can lose some context there because there are things that I experienced that are, as far as they are concerned, ancient history. (ID2, L306-317)

The example highlights various factors, such as generational differences, impacting what is considered appropriate versus inappropriate language. Ultimately, participants report the importance of teaching students to use the language of clients. Jack stated, “Ask the client what they prefer” (I2, L180). Mark agrees, stating, “We need to use [clients and students] language and not impose our own beliefs” (I2, L312-313).

According to Zach, counselor educators can remain up-to-date on language by attending professional LGBTQ+ conferences, visiting consistently updated LGBTQ+



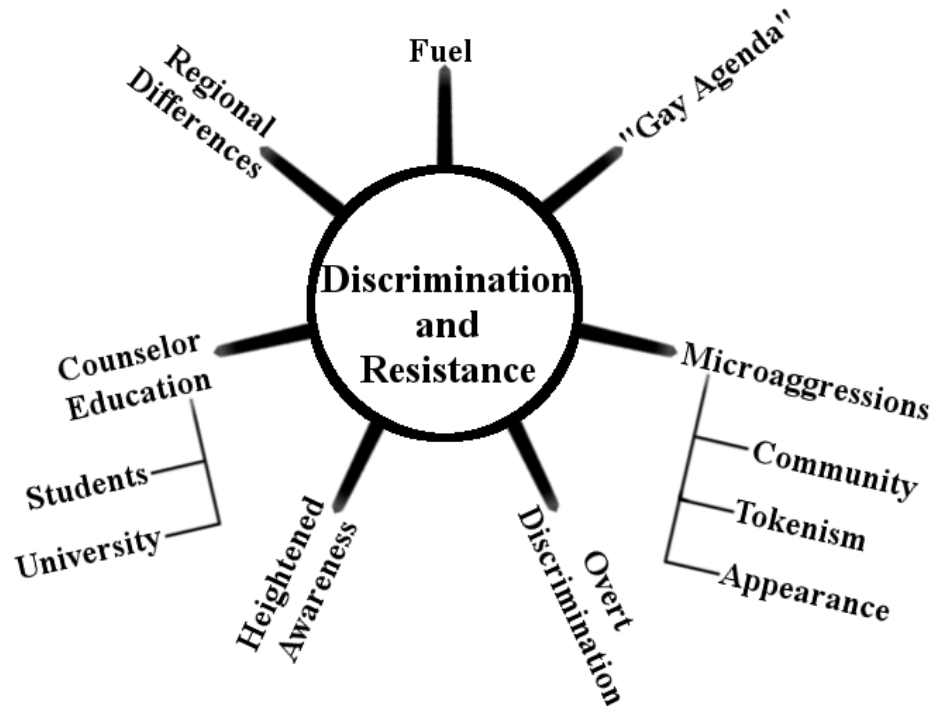
websites, and being part of community-based LGBTQ+ groups. Zach recommends the Human Rights Campaign Time to Thrive annual conference as a conference for counselor educators to attend to remain current with LGBTQ+ language. Rachel recommends students and faculty consistently visit the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD) website or the APA LGBTQ+ terminology website to stay up to date with current language. Bruce identifies being around LGBTQ+ communities as a way to remain up-to-date on language. He reported, “I think that the more that I’m around the community, I learn what people find affirmative for them” (I2, L204-205). Van has a similar perspective, stating, “It’s being immersed in the community in which I’m working” (ID2, L104-105). Sophia reported, “To me to be a competent counselor, if you’re working with LGBT clients you have to be connected to the community and you have to stay up to date on language” (I2, L342-344).

### **Discrimination and Resistance**

The third category is *Discrimination and Resistance*. Round one analysis had *Discrimination* and *Resistance* as two separate categories, but round two analysis resulted in an increase of similarities, parallels, and overlap between the previously separate categories. The following properties are a result of round two analysis: (1) “*Gay agenda*,” (2) *Microaggressions*, (3) *Overt Discrimination*, (4) *Heightened Awareness*, (5) *Counselor Education*, (6) *Regional Differences*, and (7) *Fuel*. Further, under *Microaggressions*, two new dimensions appeared: *Tokenism* and *Appearance*. Within *Counselor Education*, two dimensions emerged: *Students* and *University*. Previously, these two dimensions were properties under *Resistance*. They did not emerge as strong

as they did during round one. Figure 5.40 is a positional map of *Discrimination and Resistance*.

Figure 5.40. Discrimination and Resistance Positional Map



**“Gay agenda.”** The first property under *Discrimination and Resistance* is “*Gay Agenda*.” Similar to round one, participants continued to have examples of students and colleagues perceiving participants pushing a personal agenda based on their LGBTQ+ identity. The phrase, “gay agenda,” infers a gay or lesbian individual has a plan specifically related to their affectional orientation. Participants opted to keep the phrase “gay agenda” as it alludes to the discriminatory colloquial phrase used in daily exchanges. Limited new information emerged for this property from round two analysis. Zach stated, “There are instances of students not wanting to read certain [assignments] or feeling like they are being pushed to my ‘gay agenda’ because I make them talk about sexuality in my classroom” (I2, L181-183).

Bruce expanded on his experiences of being thought to be pushing an agenda onto students. “I’ve had some resistance push back, ‘He’s pushing his transgender agenda down our throats, and we don’t need to hear that stuff’” (I2, L535-536). In those situations, Bruce reflects on the importance of LGBTQ+ competence and also uses affirmative students to provide peer education. While there was limited new information during the second round of analysis, participants agreed this is a prominent property of their process as LGBTQ+ competent counselor educators.

The strain of being assumed to be promoting a “gay agenda” increases minority stress among LGBTQ+ competent counselors. Minority stress is the internalized strain a marginalized individual experiences based on the dominant values within society (Meyer, 2015). Participants’ experience minority stress based on the false assumption of asserting a “gay agenda.”

**Microaggressions.** Microaggressions are brief, common insults and dismissals towards marginalized populations (Nadal, 2008). *Microaggressions* is a property that matured under the category, *Discrimination and Resistance*. Within *Microaggressions*, two new dimensions have emerged: (1) *Tokenism*, and (2) *Appearance*. The previous dimension, *University*, was moved to the new property, *Counselor Education*. The dimension, *Local Community*, remains, although it stays a small dimension with limited data supporting it.

Microaggressions can be difficult to recognize due to the covertness of the slight. Zach stated, “I feel it, it stings, but it’s not always clear what exactly it is” (I2, L290). Rachel agrees, stating, “It’s like racism. I don’t know if it’s happened” (I1, L703). Jack stated he experiences microaggressions daily. He reported:

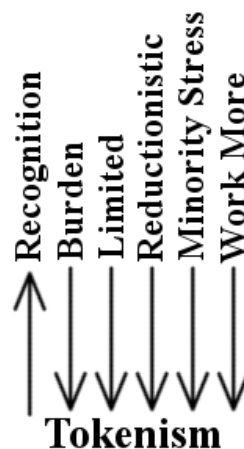
It's all the subtle things that are indicative of a heterosexist-leaning society. It's the looks. It's the pauses. You see two people walking down the street, holding hands, and they're a same-sex couple. People pause. They have strange looks, the language, the lack of role models on TV and situation comedies or love stories. (I2, L320-324)

Jack's experiences of microaggressions often occur based on heteronormative, heterosexist society. Further examples of microaggressions include, "Jokes, dark humor, stuff that you hear off-handed... If there's some level of affection that's observed, the guy is being razzed because he's gay, or this is his 'man crush' [instead of just crush]" (I2, L352-356). Jack recognizes the microaggressions he has experienced are ways for people to say, "This is not the norm" (I2, L357). As a gay man, Jack feels reduced with these constant microaggressions. He has become accustomed to microaggressions and expects to experience a microaggression with each day.

***Local community.*** In round one, the dimension, *Local Community*, emerged under the property, *Microaggressions*. Many participants have experienced microaggressions within the local community setting, such as when providing LGBTQ+ trainings to the local community. Specifically, Bruce reported being asked about his genitalia and birth name during such trainings. Throughout current LGBTQ+ trainings, Bruce infuses previous experiences of microaggressions with trainees to increase awareness and sensitivity of trainees. He requires them to agree to never ask a transgender person about their genitalia or birth name for no legitimate reason. No new data emerged from round two analysis, although participants view the dimension as an important piece of *Microaggressions*.

**Tokenism.** *Tokenism* emerged as a new dimension under the property, *Microaggressions*. Tokenism is when a marginalized individual is asked to represent an entire community or population. In this study, participants identify as the LGBTQ+ token counselor educator in the counseling department. Zach defines tokenization as, “They just think of me as that one thing. They see an identity” (I1, L374). Some participants find positive aspects of being the token as it increases awareness of the community, whereas others experience frustration as the token marginalized counselor educator. Figure 5.41 is a positional map of *Tokenism*.

Figure 5.41. Tokenism Positional Map



Participants identify the positive component of tokenization to include recognition for LGBTQ+ competence. Zach reported, “It’s nice to be recognized. I love that people recognize me for my skills, my competence as [LGBTQ+ competent]” (I1, L336-337). Mark also is recognized for his LGBTQ+ competence. He stated, “Students, faculty, staff, and colleagues... will ask my opinion about an [LGBTQ+] issue. I see it more of a positive” (I2, L345-347). Similarly, Jack experiences positivity as the “go-to gay guy on campus” (I2, L800). He continues, “I don’t have a problem with that at all, but you do kind of get type-cast” (I2, L805).

On the other hand, many participants experience difficulties as a token marginalized faculty member. Participants reported consistently working with marginalized students because other faculty would feel incompetent. Zach reflected on how he, as the gay faculty member, works with all of the LGBTQ+ students. Zach reported, “We have one Hispanic faculty member and we’re like, ‘Well, 45% of our students are Hispanic but they’d better all be served by him’” (I1, L360-361). Similarly, Van is expected to always teach diversity to students because the other faculty members assume he will cover diversity-related topics in his classes. He stated, “It certainly adds a burden... I know they’re not going to get it in other classes” (I2, L410-411). Van experiences a heavy burden with being the token LGBTQ+ competent counselor educator in his department. He reported, “I don’t want to have to deal with all that negative energy, the oppression, the weight of having to be the person that speaks about social justice issues for the program” (I2, L422-424).

When Bruce was a doctoral student, he took a psychodiagnosis class. At the last minute, the professor asked Bruce to provide the lecture on gender identity disorder (now gender dysphoria) since Bruce is transgender. Bruce reported, “Talk about a microaggression! Well, you must be the expert around it! Where was he coming from and all that?” (I2, L809-812). Bruce felt tokenized as a transgender person to be an expert on all transgender people based on his personal identity.

Bruce discussed being asked by a colleague about the local gay affirming churches. The colleague knew Bruce identifies as transgender but did not know whether he attends church. Bruce stated, “Well, I don’t go to church... There’s a point at which the assumption that I would be the one to [ask] is a little problematic” (I2, L383-390).

While Bruce shared a resource he was familiar with for his colleague to find an affirming church, he didn't appreciate the tokenization.

While Zach sees positive aspects to being recognized for his work, he also feels limited when he is tokenized. He reported, "The challenge is having people think of me as a reduced character... That can sometimes feel reductionistic... Now it also makes me wonder if they think of me as anything other than [queer]" (I2, L314-322). Similarly, Van reported, "I can do so many other things [other than teach multicultural class]. I can teach the DSM class, and I've taught it before, not here, but I've never been asked to" (I2, L426-428). As the token LGBTQ+ faculty member, participants are often assumed to take on social justice and diversity responsibilities, and are not provided other opportunities.

Most participants identify as the token LGBTQ+ person for the department. Participants have experienced being the "one marginalized group member in a department" (Van, I2, L457-458). When Sophia first became a counselor educator, she was immediately asked to present on LGBTQ+ topics. Sophia stated, "I got here to this job, and I didn't even put out any feelers, and I had folks saying, 'Can you come present on LGBT issues?'" Sophia has been the token LGBTQ+ counselor educator in her department since she first started. More recently, her department had a job opening and Sophia asked the faculty search committee how they are hoping the new hire will work with LGBTQ+ students. Sophia stated, "They said they didn't have to because they have me" (I2, L827). While departments may feel they are meeting the diversity quota, the token faculty member often identifies the department as not being diverse. Van stated:

Departments' are saying, 'Well, we've got our token person so we're good.

We've got our gay person.' Or, 'We've got our person of color, so we're diverse.'

If you ask the gay faculty member if they feel like it's a diverse department,

they'll say, 'No.' If you ask the person of color, they'll say, 'No.' (I2, L459-465)

Tokenization can add to minority stress. For Bruce, he experiences additional stress he believes his cisgender, heterosexual colleagues do not encounter. Bruce reported, "I'm getting spread too thin. I'm responding to all of these things, and I want people to know the right way to talk or say something, and yet in the process then I am just completely overwhelmed" (I2, L402-405). Sophia has experienced microaggressions and tokenization in many parts of her life and recognizes how systems of oppression perpetuate harm. She reported, "These microaggressions or micro-insults that can happen and just build up and affect your overall health and wellbeing, you know? Your mental health or your sense of self" (I2, L503-504).

***Appearance.*** *Appearance* has emerged as another dimension under the property, *Microaggressions*. Participants indicated people act differently towards them based on their appearance. Some participants believe their appearances align with LGBTQ+ exterior stereotypes while other participants stated their appearances align with heterosexual and cisgender exterior stereotypes. For example, Rachel identifies as "looking like a lesbian" and has worked both within on-campus and online environments. Rachel has experienced on-campus students' to be either more LGBTQ+-affirming or to hide nonaffirmative perspectives easily, and she wonders if this has to do with her appearance as "an out dyke... It's clear where I stand and what I would want for them" (I2, L197). Rachel currently works for an online university. Her experiences with online



students tend to be not as interactive and students are not as aware of her stance since they do not visibly see her “out dyke” (I2, L197) appearance as candidly. She reported, “They seem to be a little freer online...” (I2, L168) and do not restrict anti-LGBTQ+ sentiment based on Rachel’s appearance.

Jack reported not “appearing gay” therefore people assume he is straight. Specifically, he said, “If I walk into a crowd, my experience has been that most people assume that I’m straight... just because of the stereotypes and the behaviors and the lisp and all that kind of stuff that we’ve grown to associate with [gay men]” (I2, L235-240). For Jack, heteronormative assumptions add extra weight to his experiences as he comes out more often than someone who others would assume to be gay based on stereotypes. For all participants, their appearance has impacted experiences with microaggressions.

**Overt discrimination.** *Overt Discrimination* solidified as a strong property under the category, *Discrimination and Resistance*. Most participants reported experiencing discrimination sometime in their life, especially verbal discrimination. Zach has previously been called “faggot” (Zach, I2, L258), Mark has been called “fag” (Mark, I2, L336), Rachel has been called “dyke” in a negative context (I2, L473), and Sophia has been called a “bisexual predator” (ID2, L394), highlighting the stereotype that bisexual people are sexual predators.

Bruce attended a court hearing recently for a client who identifies as transgender. The hearing was for a judge to approve the client changing their name legally. In many states, a court hearing is a requirement for someone to legally change their name. Bruce attended to celebrate the monumental step of changing their name. Instead, the court hearing was much different than he expected. Bruce stated:

The judge had an issue with the name change. I ended up being called as an expert witness to talk about what the process is for how people change their name and educating the judge about why he needed to approve this name change. He didn't want to do it, he was worried that my client wouldn't follow through with general surgery and then would have a name that didn't match and the public would be confused. My client was awesome, and said, "Actually I'm in more danger with my name not matching the way that I present every day because then when somebody asks for my ID they see a name on my ID that doesn't match the way I present." (ID2, L674-682)

Bruce spoke as an expert witness and turned to the judge. He motioned towards the female clerk, and said to the judge, "If all of my clothes were off, I would look more like her than I would like you, your honor" (ID2, L700-702). In order to have sex reassignment surgery covered with insurance, Bruce's client needs to have their name legally changed. Bruce reported, "The judge said, 'Well they can just save up the money for the surgery'" (ID2, L773-774). Bruce responded, "It's \$30,000, your honor" (ID2, L774-775). The judge did not make a decision that day, but Bruce is hopeful his interaction as the expert witness provided education for the judge and others in the room.

Bruce encounters overt discrimination as a transgender person and is deeply impacted by experiences of violence towards transgender people. He discussed a situation a few years ago when a transgender woman broke her arm during a softball game and was denied health care in an emergency room because, "They said if she hadn't transitioned, she wouldn't be playing on a lesbian softball league, therefore, she wouldn't have broken her arm... This is ridiculous!" (ID2, L318-327). Bruce described another

situation in the South where a transgender man was diagnosed with ovarian cancer and was denied healthcare in over a dozen health care facilities. “By the time he finally found a provider to take care of him, the ovarian cancer was in late states, and there was no way he could survive” (Bruce, I2, L329-330).

Overt discrimination has occurred within counselor education as well. Zach described an experience when he was a graduate student. A professor told Zach he should not become a school counselor because he wouldn’t be hired as a gay man. Similarly, a colleague told Mark not to work with children as a counselor. Mark stated:

[My colleague] was extremely homophobic and she made a negative comment about cautioning me to be careful around when working with the children.

Implying that because I'm a gay man, I'm going to molest children or whatever.

And I was so offended and angry by that. I did tell my boss and my boss was outraged at the comment the person made. And this person's a leader in ACA. (I2, L531-535)

Sophia recalls teaching a class that already had curriculum and a textbook. She reviewed the textbook's chapter on sexual orientation and was horrified. Sophia reported, “The chapter on sexual orientation... included an example about a LGBTQ person as... a pedophile. It was really terrible” (ID2, L398-402). Participants have experienced overt discrimination in many aspects of their life, including within counselor education.

**Heightened awareness.** *Heightened Awareness* remained as a property from round one analysis. Participants identify heightened awareness to be when they experience an increased alertness surrounding their LGBTQ+ identity. Sometimes being more alert raises questions as to others intentions. For example, Jack experiences

heightened awareness when he sees people give him “weird looks” (I2, L225) when they see his truck with a rainbow bumper sticker. He reported, “That could be me assuming or being hyper-sensitive, reading into it, or just me projecting my own fear” (I2, L225-227). Zach identifies with heightened awareness, stating, “There is a sensitivity that I think is different because of my different identity” (I1, L89-90).

Another example of heightened awareness is Jack’s experience as a gay man in restrooms and locker rooms. Jack reported:

I’m very concerned if I walk into a men’s restroom and saddle up to a urinal, standing next to men who know that I’m gay. I’m terrified that they’re gonna be hyper-sensitive about it... I don’t shower in the men’s locker room for that very reason. So this whole movement of having gender-neutral bathrooms has been such a relief for me... It is definitely a struggle for me, because I’m always terrified that people are going to assume something nefarious. A straight person... It just never occurs to them to worry about that when they walk into a restroom. Why would they? (I2, L333-342)

Jack experienced heightened awareness of his identity in situations where others may reduce Jack to a stereotype of gay men, such as being sexual predators. He recognized his thought-process and concerns may be due to internalized homophobia, yet such stereotypes are prevalent in society. He reported, “I think it’s just internalized shit, but I think it’s the lack of sensitivity that people just... It never occurs to them that these are issues for us in the community” (I2, L349-350).

As a transgender man, Bruce experiences heightened awareness of his identity. Bruce has concerns of people respecting him to his face yet acting another way behind

his back. Bruce stated, “People smile and nod, and then turn around and say, ‘There’s something wrong with that person” (ID1, L162-163).

Similar to the first round, Jack has a heightened awareness when working with male students. He finds a parallel process between being a gay male professor working with a male student and a heterosexual male professor working with female student. Jack stated, “I’m always terrified of that with straight male students... So I’m gonna jump on them? It’s the fear of these sad notions about middle-aged gay men being predators” (I2, L517-520). Jack is very aware of stereotypes and intentionally checks in with his students about their relationship. The added heightened awareness of Jack’s identity as a gay professor leads to additional minority stressors.

**Counselor education.** *Counselor Education* has emerged as a property under *Discrimination and Resistance*. In the first round, *Students* and *University* were both properties under the category, *Discrimination*. In the second round, *Students* and *University* have become dimensions under the property, *Counselor Education*.

**Students.** Participants continued to discuss their experiences with resistant students throughout round two analysis. Some participants have worked with students who are directly resistant towards LGBTQ+ competence, while other participants’ found resistant students were able to hide without expressing non-affirmative views. Zach reflected on teaching a class titled “Sexuality and Counseling” over the summer, and one student in particular was very resistant. Zach stated:

She was pretty much saying, “It stinks that we have to go through this program and be indoctrinated on all this LGBTQ stuff, where we don’t believe in it, or believe that we have to practice this. Our religion and values are completely

against this. And it's a shame that we have to potentially lie for three years, we go through our counseling program, and say that we're going to do this when it's not in our value system and it shouldn't be forced upon us!" (I2, L197-202)

Zach directed the conversation towards professional ethics, specifically referring to the *ACA Code of Ethics* (2014) and the *Ward v. Wilbanks* court case. Zach modeled for the other students how to engage in a difficult dialogue while maintaining compassion and openness for the student. After class, Zach had a conversation with his colleagues regarding the student and a remediation plan was considered.

On the other hand, Rachel finds some students are able to hide non-affirming perspectives. She reported, "If [students] don't agree with [LGBTQ+ competence], they can hide" (I2, L198). The non-affirming students who hide might be able to slip through gatekeeping procedures.

The department Jack works for has specific gatekeeping procedures for students to follow and faculty to oversee. Jack has discussed gatekeeping with colleagues in his department. Jack reported:

We could end up having a very conservative Evangelical student end up in one of our programs... That's the tricky thing you have to be sensitive about. We're getting much better at our gatekeeping, and we've just completely revamped our whole admissions and application process, which includes an on-campus interview, which includes a writing sample. We have three gatekeeping courses along the way, where they're being judged on their professionalism, their skill competency, as well as their academic performance as well. (I2, L755-760)

Participants find importance with well-written, obviously stated department values and expectations in order to provide gatekeeping strategies early in the admissions process for students. Many have worked with openly resistant CITs who are non-affirming and initiated gatekeeping procedures. Other participants feared some CITs may have been able to hide their sexist, homophobic values yet still graduated.

**University.** Discrimination and resistance at the university level continued to be apparent through round two analysis. Zach described an experience of resistance from the university he worked at in the South for one year. Zach stated, “When I was in [the South], being identified as a queer faculty member and then having an administrator say, ‘Why would we want to hire him? How does he fit here?’” (I2, L178-179).

Mark experienced direct discrimination as an out gay doctoral student in the South. He was told he is “too gay” and talks “about gay too much” (I2, L364) from a professor when he was a doctoral student. Mark was tremendously impacted by the discrimination from a person in a position of power. To this day, he is conscious of how he speaks to students and encourages them to follow their interests and passions.

Before his doctoral program, Jack taught for a private, conservative Christian university. When he started, he had to sign a form of consent adhering to the principles of the Bible. After working for a few years, Jack came out as gay to a colleague. The colleague warned Jack, “Not only is this not a safe environment, you could be fired... I guess it was me and the devil worshipers” (ID2, L580-588). Jack remained in the closet for a few years after that experience before entering a doctoral program. Once he officially resigned, Jack came out as gay.

When Jack entered the counselor education profession five years ago, he recalls many multicultural courses not teaching on LGBTQ+ topics. Jack stated, “You go back, and you look at a lot of the multicultural counseling books, and there's no mention at all of sexual orientation... I had taken over courses from instructors that had never mentioned [LGBTQ+] in their course” (I2, L372-377).

Another example of discrimination and resistance within counselor education is the term “marriage and family therapy.” For Jack, “marriage” is heteronormative and outdated. Jack reported:

It still astounds me that we actually accept the term "marriage and family therapy/marriage and family therapists." I think this whole idea of marriage being the consummate union of two people is just so ridiculously outdated... In our program, we don't use that term, "marriage," or we use it in conjunction with "couple and marriage counseling." (I2, L386-394)

Jack finds “marriage” to not be inclusive of all couples, including those who do not believe in the institution of marriage or are not monogamous.

Van works for a private, religious university. When marriage equality was passed in the state, the president of the university was published in the local paper stating, “We won’t have gay marriages in our chapel” (Van, ID2, L357-358). Van was upset by the discriminatory message the president sent to the public. To counteract the statement, the counseling department at the university issued a statement on the department website supporting marriage equality.

Another example of resistance Zach experienced was being told to not publish LGBTQ+ scholarly work. Zach stated, “There were external forces telling me that this



was potentially not a good area to explore because would anything be published?” (I2, L791-793). Colleagues have told Sophia being on LGBTQ+ committees “isn’t real, like it doesn’t count” (I2, L861). She stated, “I’ve been told the committee work that I’ve done in the LGBT area isn’t real” (I2, L861). Round two analysis solidified the university setting as a dimension under the category, *Discrimination and Resistance*.

**Regional differences.** The sixth property of *Discrimination and Resistance* is *Regional Differences*. Participants have experienced discrimination and resistance differently based on the region. As Mark stated in round one, “Generally I do think a region, a geographic area, the culture of the city or town, for example, does play an impact of it” (I1, L142-143).

Rachel moved to a rural part of the Midwest over the summer from a central, progressive city in the Midwest. Rachel reported:

People here are much more closeted... I’m so used to being comfortable touching somebody or holding their hand, and that’s not so much here. I go, “Where is it safe? And why isn’t it safe? And what would happen if we did?” So for me, I’m constantly pushing.

Rachel often finds herself in the role of a counselor as she tries to understand the differences between the city she used to live in and her new home. Rachel has become more aware of heteronormativity in her new home. This is also demonstrated by Rachel as she indicated she now stops momentarily before outing herself as a lesbian, whereas previously she would automatically use she/her pronouns when mentioning her partner.

The majority of participants reported intentionally working in regions known for liberal politics and supportive for LGBTQ+ equality. Many participants reported not

considering working in the South based on the general politics of the region. In round one, Bruce, Sophia, and Zach reported non-affirming experiences from working in the South. For example, Jack stated, “I don’t know that I would ever look for a position in the South. I know that that’s a sweeping generalization” (I2, L731-732). Currently, Bruce is the only participant who works in the South. Rachel lives in a rural town in the Midwest. The rest of the participants live in generally supportive regions on the West coast, in the Southwest, and in the Midwest, and many have consciously chosen to live in openly LGBTQ+ supportive environments.

**Fuel.** The seventh property under *Discrimination and Resistance* is *Fuel*. Experiences of discrimination and resistance fueled some participant’s motivation to infuse LGBTQ+ competence throughout counselor education. The *Round Two LGBTQ+ Competent Project Map* (Figure 5.10) shows the category, *Discrimination and Resistance*, overlapping with the category, *Advocacy*, based on the impact the two categories have on each other. The dimension, *Fuel*, is the overlapping piece as many participants’ personal experiences of discrimination and resistance led to their work as LGBTQ+ competent counselor educators.

Van reported experiences of being othered as a child. Van moved to a rural town in the U.S. from Asia when he was young. He reported, “[My family and I] were quickly placed into this ‘you’re different’ and ‘something’s wrong with you...’ I felt out of place right away. Part of it was language, part of it was I looked different” (ID1, L307-309). Van has always felt different and his personal experiences have fueled his passion for social justice advocacy. Van stated, “That passion comes from pain... Maybe that’s why

I identify with folks who are gay and lesbian because they were ostracized too” (ID2, L327-333).

Rachel stated her experiences with discrimination “fires me up” (I2, L304). When Rachel first came out as lesbian, her father sent her to a psychiatrist. While she never engaged in reparative therapy, she recognized the harm of reparative therapy and “saw how bad it was out there” (I2, L605). Her experiences with discrimination from the moment she came out as lesbian have “charged” her to “go and do this work” (I2, L604). “It taps into that anger piece of me... That causes me to try to help others understand” (I2, L305-306). For Rachel, her negative experiences fuel her passion to advocate for LGBTQ+ competence. Further, living in a conservative, rural region inspires Rachel to advocate. She stated, “Living here and hearing how much people are closeted and afraid, it just really inspires me to keep working at this” (I2, L455-456). Rachel reported, “I have such a deep connection to this topic and a passion around it that I feel fueled by some of the challenges that we have. It’s kind of inspiring to me” (ID2, L498-500).

Similarly, Sophia’s fuel stems not only from her own experiences but also systems of oppression. Specifically, Sophia’s passion for LGBTQ+ advocacy was sparked when, in 2009, two elementary school boys committed suicide:

I still remember April of 2009 when two elementary school boys who committed suicide because of LGBT and... racist bullying. Jaheem Herrera and Carl Walker Hoover. They were both in elementary school, 11 years old, and they were less than a month apart, and for me I was just so torn up about that. I didn't know them, but I felt like I don't want to live in a world where children have to do that, because to me it's a violence done towards them. (I2, L906-912)

Sophia recognized how she is impacted by systems of oppression, stating, “The system of oppression around the LGBTQ stuff, so homophobia, transphobia, biphobia, or if you want to use the prejudices, homo, bi, trans prejudice [impact me]” (I2, L926-928).

Zach reported, “[Discrimination] impacted my wanting to speak more about these things...” (I2, L438-439). Specifically, Zach experienced a homophobic administrative leader at his previous institute in the South, leading to intentionally finding a supportive university and environment where he could engage as a LGBTQ+ competent counselor educator. The leader told Zach the LGBTQ+ focus in his scholarship was not pertinent in the South. Zach reported:

Having [experienced] discrimination and oppression led me to this career field...

I wanted to have a corrected experience. I wanted to fix past transgressions that I have felt so that other people didn’t feel the same way... My previous negative experiences really pushed me towards advocacy.” (I2, L160-166)

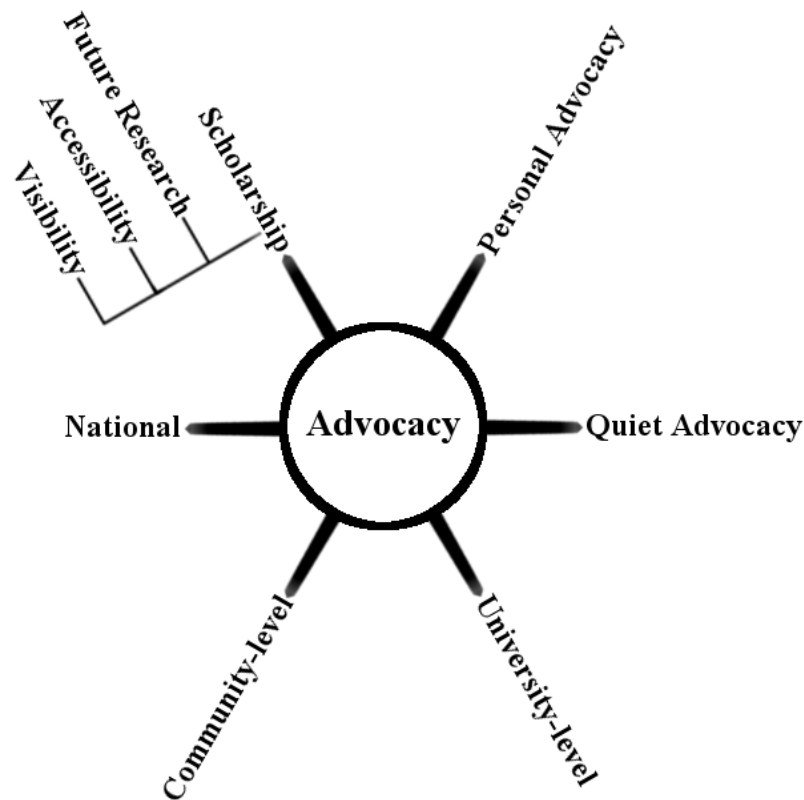
In response, Zach started a GSA within the counseling department. Instead of internalizing the message, Zach gathered his resilience and advocated on behalf and for LGBTQ+ communities.

*Fuel* has emerged during the second round of data analysis as the seventh property under the category, *Discrimination and Resistance*. *Fuel* connects the category, *Discrimination and Resistance*, with the category, *Advocacy*, as participants experience a personal connection with being LGBTQ+ advocates. Participant’s discriminatory experiences fuel them to advocate.

## Advocacy

*Advocacy* is the fourth category and connects with the previous category, *Discrimination and Resistance*, based on participants' experiences with discrimination and resistance fueling their work as LGBTQ+ advocates. Participants have personal experiences connecting them with advocacy as LGBTQ+ individuals. Participants identify with advocacy on the following levels: (1) *Personal Advocacy*, (2) *Quiet Advocacy*, (3) *University-level*, (4) *Community-level*, (5) *National*, and (6) *Scholarship*. *Scholarship* has emerged as a strong property with three dimensions, including (1) *Visibility*, (2) *Accessibility*, and (3) *Future Research*. Figure 5.50 is a positional map of the category, *Advocacy*.

Figure 5.50. Advocacy Positional Map



**Personal advocacy.** *Personal Advocacy* has emerged as a property under the category, *Advocacy*. Personal advocacy refers to infusing LGBTQ+ competence throughout one's personal life. Most participants identify with advocating for LGBTQ+ competence in their personal lives. Rachel strongly identifies with personal advocacy. She stated, "I just live it" (I2, L751). She reflected on an experience in a grocery store: "I was in a store and I heard these two young women say something about it being so gay or something and I struggled with it" (ID2, L587-589). Rachel approached the women and explained how the language of "That's so gay" is hurtful. Another recent example of Rachel engaging in personal advocacy is during an all-women's fitness class. The fitness class instructor invited the women's male spouses to the following class. At the end of class, Rachel approached the instructor and said, "I just want you to know that not everybody's honey is a he and that when you said that I didn't know if you meant I could [bring my female partner]" (ID2, L600-602). Another example Rachel shared includes the following:

Next weekend I'm going to my niece's wedding and I'm taking my partner with me. I said, "So we'll dance, right?" For her, that's kind of uncomfortable. In my family it would be weird if I didn't, but I know that there'll be people there that don't know me and don't know this and I'm like, "That's okay. We have a place there just like everybody else does." So in some way I feel like, again, I just sort of quietly show up and advocate by just being like everybody else. (I2, L751-757)

Mark engages in personal advocacy frequently. Recently, a family member said, "Oh, that's so queer" (ID2, L85). Mark responded, "Hey, why you using that term? I know you don't mean any harm by it, but it's kind of indirectly targeted at me whether

you realize it or not” (ID2, L87-89). Mark advocates for LGBTQ+ competence in his personal life.

Van identifies as actively advocating for LGBTQ+ equality in his personal life. He reported being an advocate “at home through discussions with family, through dialogue with my daughter, through what I’m trying to teach her, wherever I’m at” (ID1, L117-118). Van brings his daughter to the local Pride Festival every year to celebrate LGBTQ+ diversity. Van reported, “It’s like you’re always an advocate and a change agent no matter where you’re at” (ID1, L116-117).

For Van, personal advocacy is central to his personhood. When he first became a counselor educator, Van was surprised when fellow counselor educators who self-identify as LGBTQ+ advocates would not be LGBTQ+ competent. Van stated:

For some people, [being LGBTQ+ competent] is just a trendy thing to do... That was my first initial shock when I got in the field because I read these articles, I looked up to certain people... But then, in their personal life, they use homophobic language. I see that in conferences. I’ll be at the bar and someone will make a homophobic comment. I’m like, ‘Wait. Didn’t you just write about this? What the...’ (I2, L356-370)

Most participants advocate in their personal lives including with their families, friends, and acquaintances. Many participants refer to being an advocate in all parts of their life, both personal and professional. One participant reported frustration when counselor educators identify as LGBTQ+ advocates yet do not demonstrate LGBTQ+ competence in their personal lives.

**Quiet advocacy.** *Quiet Advocacy* is the second property under the category, *Advocacy*. *Quiet Advocacy* was previously *Introverted Advocacy* in round one. *Introverted Advocacy* fit in round one as participants' reported advocating quietly based on introverted personalities. For round two, many participants identified with advocating quietly yet reaching masses and being fueled by the quiet level of advocacy. While many participants identify as shy and introverted, many are also empowered and fueled by reaching masses from calm, quiet platforms. Rachel reported, "I'm kind of a shy person and quiet" (I2, L631-632). Mark reported, "I'm not somebody that stands on a table and screams at the top of my lungs" (I2, L773-774). Many participants identify with advocating quietly as a way to make big movements in an introverted, quiet fashion. Some participants discussed the importance of longevity. Jack reported, "It's really easy to jump into a rally and have a feel-good moment and then go home. I think it's another thing to really be committed behind the scenes, to do this long term" (I2, L1206-1208).

Jack engages in quiet advocacy on many levels. One example he shared is with a LGBTQ+ symbol on his car. He stated, "I drive a black pick-up [truck], and I have this rainbow stripe across the back" (I2, L223). Another example of how he engages in quiet advocacy is a rainbow lapel he wears on his suit every day. He reported, "That started off as an accountability piece, so I could never re-closet myself, but it ends up being a quiet statement of how that act alone made people feel safe" (I2, L1248-1250). Jack demonstrates quiet advocacy through LGBTQ+ symbols in his daily life.

He also engages in quiet advocacy through his Twitter account. Specifically, he tweets on LGBTQ+ equality issues, such as marriage equality. "I send out tweets about



things like that. That's probably, honestly, the most vocal that I am... You're not gonna see me marching in a parade!" (I2, L1136-1151).

Mark also identifies with quiet advocacy. He reported, "I think getting in people's faces, that's just not my brand of social justice" (I2, L456-457). Other examples of quiet advocacy include "sending an email or writing a letter to a government official or signing a petition" (Mark, I2, L763-764). Mark encourages students and counselor educators to engage in quiet advocacy through writing to leaders. He also invites conversations through education. He reported, "I believe in educating and raising awareness through relationship building and getting people to know me and trusting me, and then challenging it in a more humanistic way, rather than getting in somebody's face" (I2, L463-465).

Similarly, Rachel identifies as a "quiet advocate" (I2, L667). She stated, "I don't lead or do things in a loud way. My hope is that I invite people to be curious and wonder about what they do as it relates to LGBTQ stuff" (I2, L684-687). Rachel does this by inviting conversation around LGBTQ+ topics.

**University level.** Advocacy at the *University Level* is the third property under the category, *Advocacy*. All participants are engaged in LGBTQ+ advocacy at the university-level. Some participants provide LGBTQ+ educational workshops, advocate for LGBTQ+ inclusion in the university, or organize LGBTQ+ fundraising events.

Jack reported recently starting a program in the graduate program at his university focusing on increasing LGBTQ+ competency in counseling and counselor education. As the faculty advisor for the program, Jack is assisting students develop an online LGBTQ+

advocacy training module. While the program is currently at the university-level, Jack has hopes of the website being accessible to anyone.

When Mark was a doctoral student in the South, he started an LGBTQ+ advocacy day at the university. He reported, “Jeans Day... in 1974, and Jeans Day is usually celebrated on National Coming Out Day on October 10th. And for that one day at universities, if you're supportive of LGBT issue, you wear jeans” (I2, L482-485). Mark reflects on the importance of having subtle advocacy in the South based on the conservative environment.

Currently, Mark is working at the university level on transgender equality policies. Specifically, he stated, “I was advocating about... having a preferred name policy, how do we deal with transgender students who are going through surgery and how does that affect absences especially if they miss more than the one allowable absence thing” (ID2, L294-296).

Another example of LGBTQ+ advocacy at the university-level is Jack’s leadership with Chi Sigma Iota (CSI), an honor society for graduate counseling students, chapter at his university. The students held a fundraiser for CSI by selling rainbow ribbons for one dollar outside of the university library. The fundraiser spread awareness for LGBTQ+ equality. Participants engaged in advocacy at the university level through increasing LGBTQ+ competency, advocating for LGBTQ+ inclusion within universities, and organizing LGBTQ+ fundraising events.

**Community level.** *Community Level* advocacy is the fourth property under *Advocacy*. Participants engaged in LGBTQ+ advocacy at the community level, such as Sophia joining LGBTQ+ ally marches as a way to increase support and feel empowered.

During one march, Sophia carried the loud speaker and chanted, “Hey hey, ho ho, homophobia’s got to go!” (ID2, L435-436). A group of men were shouting derogatory comments to the marchers. Sophia turned the loud speaker directly toward them and continued chanting. She reported, “I felt like I have a voice. It’s very empowering... It made me realize how much I needed that community, and how rejuvenated I felt just by being able to be surrounded by the people that were in our ally march” (ID2, L424-427).

A couple of participants, including Van and Mark, have volunteered at LGBTQ+ mental health agencies to offer pro bono counseling services for the local LGBTQ+ communities. Mark stated, “I provided pro-bono counseling and advocacy [for over five years]” (I1, L586-587). Community advocacy provides support for local LGBTQ+ communities.

**National.** Although many participants identify as “shy” (Rachel, I2, L 631) or as an “introvert” (Zach, I2, L834), all participants have advocated at the *National Level*. Rachel reported, “I’m kind of a shy person and quiet. I didn’t think I was going to be at this national level doing this stuff” (I2, L631-63). When Rachel was in a leadership role with ALGBTIC, she would work with other organizations on how to be inclusive of LGBTQ+ people. Rachel reported, “It’s inviting people to be inclusive without saying, ‘Hey, what about the queer?’ I kind of like showing up as the gay person. I’m like, ‘Hi, here I am. So how are you going to make room for me?’” (I2, L717-719). Rachel’s calm, compassionate demeanor leads to visibility and inclusivity.

On the other hand, Sophia identifies as being loud and radical. She challenges systems and actively makes change at macro levels. Sophia reported:

I'm someone who does believe the world can change. I'm not liberal. I don't believe in small changes that eventually like we're going to be okay. I'm radical. I believe in big systemic change. We need to sometimes tear the whole thing down to create something new. (I2, L1059-1062)

All participants have engaged in leadership at the national level. Many participants have held leadership positions for ALGBTIC and Counselors for Social Justice (CSJ); all participants have presented at various levels, including state, regional, national, and international, and many participants are involved in various advocacy projects. For example, Bruce is involved in transgender advocacy at the national level through involvement with the Gender Identity Advocates and World Professional Association for Transgender Health (WPATH) Standards of Care (2015).

**Scholarship.** *Scholarship* has emerged as a new property under the category, *Advocacy*. Participants identify scholarship as a form of advocacy. Van reflected on scholarship as influential with how people see the world. He stated, “[Scholarship] shapes practices and influences the way in which people see the world. It shapes social policy. It informs future practice” (I2, L673-675). Rachel views scholarship as having a ripple effect. She reported:

In my mind, we start [with scholarship], we educate those who educate others and then we explore ways to explode our thinking outside of the boxes that we've created and then help those people who are boxed in, unbox themselves so they can help clients. Then, kumbayah, we change the world. (I2, L834-837)

Participants reflected the goal of scholarship is to inform counselors, counselor educators, and the community on LGBTQ+ topics. Zach reported, “I write about

[LGBTQ+ competence] so that people can be informed. [Even] if they only read the title, at least they have to think about queer issues for five seconds” (I2, L755-761). Similarly, Jack reported, “Writing up and getting published are all for the purpose of helping counselors and people to help us better understand the gay experience” (I2, L1462-1464). Zach stated, “I think the role of scholarship is to challenge us to think beyond ourselves and beyond what we know and to really see the impact and the influence that different things have on a queer persons’ lives” (I2, L919-922). Jack reported, “By me researching, by me publishing in that area, it continues to promote LGBTQ advocacy” (I2, L1437-1438).

While participants engage in both quantitative and qualitative methodologies, the majority of participants recognize qualitative research to be very impactful specifically regarding LGBTQ+ scholarship. Jack reported:

I absolutely believe that qualitative research can do so much specifically for LGBTQ advocacy, because we tell people's lived experiences. We tell their stories. Those things need to be heard, because the research does indicate that when people are hit at a heart level, at a personal level, about the plight of under-represented people groups, their fears are laid, assuaged, and their perceptions begin to change. (I2, L1612-1618)

Participants focus on specialties within LGBTQ+ scholarship that often align with their personal passions and/or identities. For example, Jack’s research focuses on LGBTQ+ spiritual development. Van studies LGBTQ+ allies. Bruce researches transgender scholarship. Mark focuses on LGBTQ+ ethics in counseling. Participants have both a personal and professional passion for LGBTQ+ scholarship.

Bruce is actively engaged in several transgender-focused scholarly projects. Bruce discussed having 15 active scholarly projects he is engaged in and “Every single... is trans-related” (I2, L891). For Bruce, scholarship is advocacy because “I want to make sure that the right messages get out there about trans people and their lives” (I2, L914-915).

**Visibility.** Participants reflected on the social justice issue of visibility within scholarship. Participants experience difficulties with publishing LGBTQ+-focused manuscripts in tier one, peer-reviewed review journals, such as the Journal of Counseling and Development (JCD). To publish LGBTQ+ scholarship, the research must be innovative. Jack reported having manuscripts rejected because “I don’t have that sharp edge to my research. Basically the rejection letter was, ‘You’re not telling us anything new’” (I2, L1494-1485). At the same time, according to Van, LGBTQ+ scholarship must be written with extremely high quality and cannot be controversial in order to be published. Van stated:

It’s hard to get [LGBTQ+ scholarship] published in tier one journals because they look at it as fluff, and so you have to write a little better, you have to try a little harder, you have to be more tight in terms of your research or methodology... It gets viewed in a more critical way because tier one journals don’t want to... send the wrong message because they’re trying to play the entire field. They don’t want to seem biased. (I2, L677-679)

Van reflected on how LGBTQ+ scholarship can be seen as controversial in peer-reviewed journals due to these journals wanting to attract all counselors with various values. Van continued, “You have to hold back with what you say in your article to get

accepted. You can't sound so much like an activist" (I2, L711-712). Van reported LGBTQ+ scholarship as a balancing act of wanting to reach counselors yet in order to do so, he needs to hold back his whole being and can only let out the parts that are acceptable within peer-review journals.

Further, participants reflected on the need to be published within peer-reviewed journals for tenure. Participants identify with needing to "play the game" (Rachel, I2, L901) in order to be published and stay employed at a university. Rachel reported, "If you're in a promotion and tenure track, then... this whole pecking order of what has greater status in terms on scholarship... that's really important" (I2, L891-893). Rachel recognizes an article published in *Counseling Today* may reach more counselors, yet will not be considered towards tenure. On the other hand, Zach reported engaging in LGBTQ+ scholarship to increase LGBTQ+ visibility, and not just for tenure. He stated, "I don't just do it so I can hit tenure or move through the university system... And so, that's how I see scholarship as a form of advocacy because it has been marginalized, historically, in the greater canon" (I2, L755-762).

The limited LGBTQ+ scholarship within ACA journals influences the counseling profession as a whole. Van reported, "It impacts [the profession] because LGBT, multicultural, and social justice [topics] remain on the fringes, so it doesn't influence practice as much" (I2, L733-735). The participants noted the lack of LGBTQ+ scholarship within the ACA journals represented silencing LGBTQ+ communities and LGBTQ+ competent counseling.

**Accessibility.** Participants discussed the lack of accessibility of LGBTQ+ scholarship for those not in academic settings. According to Sophia, clinicians do not

have access to peer review journals. She stated, “Counselors... don’t have access to libraries [with peer-review journal articles]” (I2, L1226-1227). Jack reported, “Most clinicians don’t read journals... It’s an academic and vain exercise. So I’m really trying to find journals that are more easily accessible” (I2, L1532-1534). In order to increase accessibility, Sophia mentioned ALGBTIC has provided free access to the LGBQQIA and Transgender competencies.

While many clinicians do not read journals, counselor educators often do. Jack stated, “I just think we get in this ivory tower... We take ourselves way too seriously!” (I2, L1539-1540). Similarly, Rachel finds journal articles to be written in academic language. She stated, “That language is so unavailable sometimes” (I2, L824-825). Rachel recommends using common, day-to-day language and focus on practice-oriented articles. At the same time, Jack points out, “The top-tier journals aren’t gonna look at practice-oriented articles” (I2, L1505-1506). Participants recognize tier one, peer-reviewed review journals do not often publish practice-oriented articles. Rachel finds a need to “bridge” (I2, L861) the scholarly gap between counselor educators and counselors yet there is difficulty in doing so based on lack of accessibility. Rachel reported, “Unless I make [my scholarship] more accessible, it’s meaningless” (I2, L870).

Van finds how other venues, such “CD’s, videos, magazines, pop culture... *Counseling Today*” (Van, I2, L817-827), reach wider audiences, specifically practitioners, who are the ones active in the field. Bruce identifies with this as well, stating, “We can’t just rely on peer review journals to get the message out around the work that we do with LGBTQ people, because the average lay person doesn’t have access to those journals” (I2, L947-949). Bruce recently published an article discussing the challenges of research



accessibility. Bruce reflected on the lack of accessibility for clinicians who may benefit from scholarly works with the high cost of purchasing peer-reviewed journal subscriptions.

Participants attempt to increase accessibility to their scholarly works in various ways. Jack distributes his publications through presentations throughout the region for clinicians. Participants recognize clinicians not in academic settings lack accessibility of LGBTQ+ scholarship.

***Future research.*** Participants identify many areas needed for future research. Specifically, participants reported the following areas to be needed for future research: “Children of queer people” (Zach, I2, L950), “intersex people” (Zach, I2, L959), “intersectionality” (Van, ID2, L213), “LGBTQ+ competence in CACREP standards” (Rachel, I2, L968), “non-binary gender” (Sophia, I2, L1166), “pansexuality” and “polysexuality” (Sophia, I2, L1135), “body image” in the gay community (Mark, I2, L649), and “geriatric [LGBTQ+] populations” (Mark, I2, L650). Mark reported, “LGBT elderly in our community are ignored and left to fend [for themselves]... I tell my friends, if I had the money, I would open up a gay nursing home. You can have gay bingo, gay drag shows. I would do all that” (I2, L654-659).

According to participants, intersectionality is an emerging area for future research. Specifically, Mark reported the current LGBTQ+ community to be “very racist, very White-centric culture” (I2, L680). He continued, “I think we need to do a better job across the board as far as having more diverse representation, even within our own profession” (I2, L681-682). Van agrees, stating, “I think the next area of future research

is intersectionality... You can't separate sexuality and not look at other factors that make up human identity” (ID2, L213-215).

Participants recognized many future avenues for scholarship surrounding LGBTQ+ issues. Many pointed out intersectionality as an emerging topic, noting the need for more diversity within the literature. As a group, they noted the need for more scholarship to give voice to LGBTQ+ issues.

### **Techniques**

The final category after round two data collection and analysis is *Techniques*. *Techniques* was an emerging category after round one analysis and solidified as a core category after round two analysis. Participants identify the following as LGBTQ+ techniques to use in the classroom and supervision: Providing a safe space, discussing LGBTQ+ history, being a mentor, being out as LGBTQ+, using current events, including LGBTQ+ case studies, engaging in difficult dialogues, utilizing peer education, infusing experiential activities, having LGBTQ+ guest speakers, including cultural immersion and community engagement experiences, intentional pedagogical traits, and infusion of LGBTQ+ competence throughout the classroom and supervision.

*Figure 5.60. Techniques Positional Map*

**Safe space.** The first property under the category, *Techniques*, is *Safe Space*.

Participants agree on providing safe, yet uncomfortable spaces for students in the classroom and in supervision. Rachel identified safe spaces to be both psychological and physical. Participants discussed providing safe spaces in order for students to be challenged and expand critical thinking. Participants used various techniques to provide safe spaces in the classroom and in supervision.

According to participants, intentional language is often the foundation of safety. Van stated, “It begins with the language I use” (ID2, L237). Rachel stated, “The language that I choose hopefully provides a sense of safety” (ID2, L754-755). Rachel models for students and supervisees current, respectful language and encourages students to be responsible for the language they use.

Jack starts every class by reviewing the general code of conduct and statement of inclusivity. Often, Jack prints the statement and has students sign and turn it in as a way of acknowledging its importance. The code of conduct he requires students to follow includes the following:

Disagreeing with ideas, holding alternative views and challenging the status quo are all a part of the higher education tradition, as they provoke us to re-examine our own thinking. That being said, this WILL be a safe and welcoming learning environment for students of all races, ethnicities, sexual orientations, gender identities, ages, religions, economic classes and ability statuses. To achieve this, you will be expected to engage in all classroom activities and assignments in a respectful, inclusive and culturally appropriate manner and to maintain confidentiality when students share personal information. (Discourse Analysis, Jack 1)

Similarly, Sophia has students come up with ground rules in order to increase awareness and respect for each other. She reported one ground rule example used in the past is, “Say ‘ouch’ out loud if someone uses a [hurtful] word” (ID2, L693). She continued, “We try to create a safe learning space so if you’re going to make a mistake, it’s the place to do it” (ID2, L704-705). Along the same lines of respecting one another, Bruce begins the class asking for students to share their preferred name and pronoun. Bruce does not want to make assumptions based on appearance.

Sophia stays away from shaming students and instead has the perspective of “Let’s educate each other” (I2, 388). Similarly, Rachel takes a step back to understand the student’s perspective in order to reduce shame. She reported, “I just play stupid with

them so that they cannot feel embarrassed by it” (ID2, L105-106). Jack provides safe spaces in the classroom for students to challenge their thinking and explore new concepts “without feeling like they’re going to be attacked” (ID2, L117-118). He does this by communicating in a sensitive, conscious way. Jack reported, “It’s how I convey it and how people are able to interact in those spaces” (ID2, L109-110).

Bruce shared:

I want to call people out on stuff, but I don’t want, especially in class settings, I don’t feel it’s important to embarrass them in front of their peers, so I’m really torn around, should I have said something in the moment, or will a comment on her grades be sufficient, or a conversation following it up... (I2, L126-130)

Jack creates a safe space in the classroom in order for students to feel safe with uncomfortable dialogues. He stated, “We have long talks about that at the beginning of the semester. We have got to create an environment where people are safe to share, or we’re not gonna grow and learn” (I2, L532-534). As a result of co-creating a safe space in the classroom, students bring up uncomfortable topics and questions. For example, Jack reported:

It’s been really cool because I’ve had students say things like, “Okay. I want to put this out in the room. I don’t know if I’m saying it right. So no one jump down my throat.” Right? Then everyone kind of giggles, and we stay, and we have the conversation. (I2, L540-543)

Mark provides safe spaces for his students and supervisees. He reported, “I don’t want any of my supervisees to be hesitant about talking about their struggles... I affirm them... I validate them” (ID2, L769-778). Similarly, Zach validates students and asks

open-ended questions to encourage students to discuss difficulties. In supervision, Zach utilizes Bernard's Discrimination Model of Supervision (1979) and takes on the role of 'counselor' to provide safe spaces for supervisees. Zach reported, "My way of checking in... is to model how they can talk to their clients... as well as really explore what's some of those ongoing processes" (ID2, L174-176).

Many participants have visuals demonstrating safe space. For example, Rachel reported, "I had a Safe Space sticker on my door so students knew... psychologically they'd be safe and emotionally safe if they were to come out" (ID2, L743-744). Van also has safe space visuals in his office.

During the first semester of the counseling program, counseling students in Sophia's program are required to take a Safe Space Training. She reported, "We send the message right off that you're going to get this everywhere you go" (ID2, L623-624). Students learn about LGBTQ+ definitions, language, and basic knowledge about LGBTQ+ communities. Students also engage in a self-awareness activity to increase awareness of personal value and biases towards LGBTQ+ communities. Sophia finds importance in educating students on the impact they have on each other and how to be respectful of diversity.

Participants provide safe spaces in the classroom to validate and affirm CITs. Safe spaces allow students to grow and be challenged through uncomfortable dialogues. Participants form safe spaces through intentional language, code of conducts, and ground rules.

**History.** Another property under the category, *Techniques*, is *History*. Several participants referred to the importance of discussing the history of the marginalization of

LGBTQ+ people within psychology and counseling. Participants introduce topics such as the roots of conversion therapy and how “homosexuality” was previously a disorder in the DSM. For example, when Bruce teaches psychological diagnosis, he includes the history of homosexuality as a previous diagnosis in the DSM. Bruce shares with the class how homosexuality was eventually removed from the DSM in 1973, and conditions pertaining to homosexuality were not entirely removed until 1987.

Similarly, Bruce provides education on the previous diagnosis of ‘gender identity disorder’ and the current diagnosis of ‘gender dysphoria’. Gender identity disorder was in the DSM until 2013 as a medical disorder pathologizing gender variance and reinforcing the binary model of gender. Gender dysphoria is the current diagnosis and emphasizes diagnosing only those who experience discontent with their gender identity. Bruce advocates against diagnosing transgender people and he shares this perspective with students. Bruce stated, “Take us out of the DSM. This isn’t where we belong. We’re being mistreated as a result of being here” (ID2, L872-874). Van also teaches about the history of gender identity disorder and gender dysphoria. He reported, “I talk about... the problem with [gender dysphoria being in the DSM] and how that’s a double-edged sword in a sense” (ID2, L256-257).

Participants also introduce the history and evolution of LGBTQ+ language to students. For example, Jack introduces his students to the term “homosexual” as a “derogatory clinical term... [from] the DSM pre-1973” (I2, L276-277). Rachel adds, “I let [students] know that [‘homosexual’] is an old term and it really reduces a person’s identity... to the sexual piece” (I2, L87-89).

Van assigns a LGBTQ+ history book as a class reading. In class, students discuss the book in small groups and are assigned different roles. Van reported:

I'll have them go into different roles... One person has to identify major concepts that relate to the main textbook from the readings. Another student's role is to come up with 10 questions that they want to bring to the group based on reading that book. Another student brings something that's artistic that reflects that book that they read. Another person is the discussion leader, where they facilitate the discussion. So I have them get into these different roles and talk about the book. (ID2, L288-292)

**Mentor.** Similar to round one analysis, all participants identify as a *Mentor*.

Limited new information emerged for this property during round two analysis. Rachel spoke exclusively of mentoring around LGBTQ+ topics. She is currently working with a few doctoral students on mental health issues for LGBTQ+ people. Rachel stated, "I'm going to kind of help guide a little bit, kind of support them. I think that by being out I make a place where they can come to and then I can mentor and they can join" (I2, L787-788). Most participants identify as mentors for LGBTQ+ CITs, and a few participants identify as mentors for all CITs. Mentorship appears to be infused throughout various aspects of counselor education, including in the classroom, supervision, research, and advocacy.

**Out.** During the second round of data analysis, the property, *Out*, remained significant. Participants identify being out as LGBTQ+ as an important part of being an LGBTQ+ competent counselor educator. Being out provides visibility for CITs, normalizing and humanizing LGBTQ+ individuals. In round one, participants' reflected



on the positive impact being out has on students. Jack stated, “It changes everything about the trajectory of how [CITs are] going to approach this issue in the future” (I1, L1055-1062). Participants are out in different ways. Mark stated, “It’s not like I wear an “I am gay” T-shirt, but I make it known” (I2, L565).

As an out transgender educator, Bruce shares his personal experiences of oppression with his students. He shares his personal experiences of discrimination, such as the possibility of being fired for being transgender, as a way to increase CIT’s compassion and understanding towards LGBTQ+ individuals. Being out appears to increase awareness and visibility.

**Current events.** *Current Events* remained a strong property during the second round analysis. Current events are often infused in the classroom and supervision. Some participants find current events difficult to not include. For example, Rachel identifies “the personal is political and political is personal... You have to decide which pieces you’re going to attend to and which ones you aren’t” (ID2, L959-961). As LGBTQ+ competent counselor educators, participants infuse LGBTQ+ current events in the classroom and supervision regularly.

Rachel infuses current events in the classroom consistently. She recently has brought the topic of Caitlyn Jenner, an Olympic athlete who transitioned from male to female, to the classroom. Students had a variety of responses, including “That’s wonderful” and “Why is she making it so public?” (ID2, L909-910). Previously, she discussed marriage equality when states were quickly affirming civil rights for LGBTQ+ marriage. Rachel stated, “I would talk about what is it like to know in this state you can do this and in this state you can’t. What would it be like if you were working with a client

who was struggling with that?” (ID2, L913-915). Rachel recognizes how the environment impacts students and clients. “I talk with students about how to be aware about what’s going on in their environment socially, politically, current events-wise [because] it’s impacting your clients” (ID2, L982-984).

Mark infuses everyday events in the classes he teaches. For example, when Mark teaches an ethics course, he uses an activity titled, “Everyday Ethics” (ID2, L791). Students share a current event with the class and the class discussed the counseling ethical implications. Similarly, when Mark teaches a multicultural counseling course, he assigns a similar assignment titled, “Everyday Diversity” (ID2, L803). Students share current events and the class discusses how the topic relates to counseling. Mark reported, “For example, maybe they found an article about a company who has a transgender employee who is fighting for equal rights” (ID2, L806-807). The activity stimulates class discussion on current events impacting counseling.

Zach sometimes infuses current events in the classroom with a sense of humor. He recently shared a New York Times cartoon: “There was one recently... This guy who's wearing this backwards t-shirt, football jersey, jeans, overweight guy with these two very very trim woman. And [it says], ‘Tom, is flamboyantly straight.’” Zach brought this to the class to discuss the assumptions with the word “flamboyant.”

**Case studies.** During the second round of data collection, the property *Case Studies* did not appear to be as significant as it was within the first round of data analysis. Participants agreed to keep the category as many of them infuse case studies with LGBTQ+ people within the classroom. Specifically, participants use case studies with LGBTQ+ clients in role-play activities. Other participants use case studies to explore

ethical situations or psychological diagnosis. Case studies with LGBTQ+ examples can increase CIT competence through real-life examples. Participants did not have additional examples to share.

**Difficult dialogues.** During the second round of interviews, *Difficult Dialogues* remained an important property of *Techniques*. *Difficult Dialogues* can be defined as challenging, probing discussions with students in the classroom or in supervision. Zach stated, “I think a teacher has to challenge our biases and our assumptions of population” (I2, L915-916).

Working in the South, Bruce often has difficult dialogues with students based on fundamentalist religious beliefs. Bruce discussed a difficult dialogue with a student who was experiencing difficulty with LGBTQ+ competence based on his religious values. He shared with the student his personal experience with religion when he was in high school and college. Bruce stated, “I shared with him that I spent a number of years in high school and early college in a fundamentalist Christian church, and it was made very clear to me that I was going to hell” (I2, L497-498). The personal disclosure during a difficult dialogue proved to be beneficial with increasing understanding of the benefits of LGBTQ+ competent counseling.

Jack finds importance in having difficult dialogues around microaggressions towards LGBTQ+ communities. He reported, “It’s a fruitful discussion to talk about inadvertent, unintentional microaggressions. I’ve seen that really, really give birth to some amazing discussions and people were just like, ‘Oh, my god. I never realized!’” (I2, L261-263). As difficult dialogues become heated, Jack leads a class discussion to process the difficult dialogue. Jack will start by asking, “How do we feel about that

statement that was just said? Can we have that in our discussion and it'll still be a safe environment?" (ID2, L181-183).

Sophia assigns students a project to interact with people in their life and talk about differences they have. Sophia reported, "[For example], a male student might go home and talk to his mom about gender... Or a heterosexual student might talk to a gay friend about that difference in their life" (ID2, L745-751). After the dialogue, students discuss the conversation in class and reflect on their growth.

In some classes, Mark finds it important to "introduce a topic [LGBTQ+ competence] in a non-sexual way" (ID2, L837). He does this by incorporating LGBTQ+ children's literature, such as "And Tango Makes Three" (Richardson & Pernell, 2015) and "Heather Has Two Mommies" (Newman, 2015). Mark stated, "I'll pass them around in class. I'll talk about how I use them in my practice" (ID2, L829-830).

Difficult dialogues provide the opportunity for CITs assumptions and biases to be challenged. Participants use personal disclosure and discussions on microaggressions towards LGBTQ+ communities to challenge CITs. Discussions on personal differences embolden CITs to recognize how their personal identity and position of privilege may impact their clients.

**Peer education.** *Peer Education* is a technique emerging from round two analysis. Many participants identify using peer education. Sophia introduces the idea by sharing an article in the first semester discussing how "when you're silent, you're denying others learning opportunities that you have and the importance of participating to the learning community" (ID2, L1143-1146). Participants encourage CITs to share their experiences in order for students to learn from one another.

Bruce experienced microaggressions in the classroom when he self-disclosed his identity as a previous lesbian woman and a current transgender man. A student confronted Bruce in class, stating, “Well, wait were you a lesbian before and now you’re a gay man? Doesn’t that make you a heterosexual woman?” (Bruce, I2, L553-554). Another student in the class stepped in and “totally schooled that guy... Sometimes that goes a lot further than me as the speaker up in front of the room” (Bruce, I2, L557-559). Bruce intentionally is aware of student body language and nonverbal skills as a way of identifying allies in the classroom. He considers who maintains eye contact, has open body posture, and other nonverbal skills while broaching LGBTQ+ competence in the classroom. Bruce’s experiences demonstrate students with supportive nonverbal skills during LGBTQ+ topics in the classroom tend to be the allies who speak up during class dialogues.

Rachel has also utilized peer education in the classroom. She previously had a student from a region in Africa where being gay or lesbian is punishable by death. He consistently used the term “homosexual” and students would politely inquire about his culture. Ultimately, students were curious about his perspective and simultaneously informed him about LGBTQ+ competence in the counseling profession. Rachel stated, “They took on some advocacy roles that I didn’t have to” (ID2, L93-93). Students stepped forward and asked the student from Africa about his experiences. At the same time, students shared best practices with LGBTQ+ competence.

Peer education provides a platform for CITs to learn from one another. CITs are able to support the counselor educator and provide a new lens for classmates. Peer education promotes egalitarian education and acknowledges every CIT has a different

understanding of the world. This enriches the classroom by broadening perspectives in respectful ways.

**Experiential.** Another new technique emerging from round two data collection is *Experiential*. Many participants identify with using experiential activities in the classroom. Sophia reported, “My classes are very experiential, they're very much based on students learning and applying their learning in the classroom” (ID2, L953-955). Jack uses fish bowl, role-play counseling sessions in his classes. He recently began incorporating role-plays with same-sex couples as part of the fish bowl activity. Jack asked two heterosexual-identifying students to volunteer as a couple in a same-gender relationship. He reported:

I went to just two of my straight-identifying males, and I said, "Hey. I've got this scenario for you. Let me run it by you. You tell me if you have any issues around it." Not only did they not have any issues around it, they got really excited, and they literally knocked it out of the park. Afterwards, the students thanked me for bringing that scenario into the room, and it felt so good. (I2, L1391-1395)

Jack finished the fish bowl role-play activity with a class discussion. Experiential activities provide the opportunity for CITs to creatively understand LGBTQ+ competent counseling through action.

**Cultural events.** *Cultural Events* emerged as a new property during round two data collection. Participants identify *Cultural Events* to include cultural immersion activities, student leading Gay Straight Alliances (GSA's), inviting guest speakers into the classroom, and community engagement. Participants use *Cultural Events* throughout

the classroom and supervision to increase student's personal experiences with LGBTQ+ communities.

Many participants discussed assigning students to immerse themselves in a culture different from their own. Bruce discussed the importance of having students stretch outside of their comfort zone. He reported:

One of the assignments was that they were supposed to go to an event that represented a culture that they weren't familiar with and then write a paper about that. If there's someone who's Baptist, I don't want them going to a Presbyterian church. That's not stretching yourself enough in ways that...if you want to do something religious, go to an Islam or a Muslim service, or a synagogue, and do something. More Christian isn't different enough. (ID2, L944-951)

Zach finds importance in being intentional with immersion experiences. He recommends the following places for LGBTQ+ immersion activities: "LGBTQ community centers... LGBTQ bookstores, LGBTQ-run businesses like coffee shops... LGBTQ support groups, such as PFLAG" (ID2, L86-91). Van assigns a similar project for students. He encourages students to attend transgender support groups and LGBTQ+ AA meetings.

Zach and Van both have students lead GSA's. Zach teaches students how to facilitate groups and how to work with LGBTQ+ populations. Students build empathy and learn about LGBTQ+ youth when working directly in schools. Van finds students who are on the fence with being LGBTQ+ competent because "I think they can have a really big impact... I don't worry so much about those who already view themselves as an ally" (ID2, L451-454).

Many participants bring in guest speakers, especially when discussing LGBTQ+ topics. Mark reported, “I bring in guest speakers from the LGBT community” (ID2, L877). Similarly, Mark assigns students to interview someone who identifies as LGBTQ+ or a counselor who specializes with counseling the LGBTQ+ community, and then students write a reflection paper on their experience.

Community engagement is defined as being immersed within a population. Sophia finds community engagement to be a step beyond cultural immersion. She identifies community engagement as:

Are you ever attending events, do you know people in the community, who do you go to for resources, are you respected, do people know who you are? Are you tapped into what's happening in your area, are you tapped into like what's happening in your community? (I2, L1264-1268)

Sophia encourages students to step outside of their comfort zone and become involved with LGBTQ+ communities. She relates this to when people state they have a Black friend. Sophia reported:

I was reading something around White privilege, and it was talking about the whole I have a Black friend thing, and it's like if you haven't been invited to the barbecue or the birthday party or if you don't get the wedding invitation, you don't have a Black friend. You have a Black acquaintance. (I2, L1291-1294)

Sophia finds importance for counseling students to engage in communities different than their own. “Do I stay in my safe place... and do my good little White cisgender collar whatever counselor job and help them, as opposed to working collaboratively?” (I2,



L1298-1303). Sophia encourages her students to step beyond their comfort zone by engaging in communities unlike their own.

*Cultural Events* provides the opportunity for CITs' to become engaged in a culture different from their own, such as LGBTQ+ communities. Participants use cultural engagement activities, including having LGBTQ+ guest speakers in the classroom. Other intentional examples include attending cultural events or facilitating groups, such as leading GSA's. Community immersion is a step beyond cultural engagement and includes advocating with and on behalf of a cultural group, such as LGBTQ+ communities.

**Pedagogical traits.** During the second round of data analysis, the category, *Pedagogical Traits*, continued to strengthen as a core property. Participants expressed their pedagogy through examples and explanations. Participants share a variety of pedagogical traits, including social justice, multicultural, feminist approaches as transparent counselor educators.

Many participants are aware of the power they hold as the instructor of the class or supervisor in supervision, and utilize a feminist philosophy to decrease the power differential. Rachel identifies as a feminist and stated, "I'm very feminist. [I focus on] having a relationship with the students" (ID2, L1050-1051). Sophia also identifies as a feminist. One way she demonstrates this is by teaching in a circle. Sophia reported, "I talk with my students about how the circle promotes equality, or equity, and just the ways that we will interact instead of it being like always like student to teacher, teacher to student" (ID2, L862-864). Other participants also intentionally reduce the power differential in the classroom. Jack reported, "I just do not see myself as anything close to

an expert in all these issues. And we need to have reducing the power differential in the room, so not setting myself up as the sole expert” (ID2, L354-357).

Zach has a similar philosophy in supervision. He is aware of the power he holds as the supervisor and states, “I really attend to the relationship, I really attend to here and now, and I do a lot of checkups” (ID2, L134-136). For Zach, this increases safety in the relationship and increase learning.

All participants identify as being transparent in the classroom. For Jack, he is intentionally open about his experiences of learning new language. Jack stated, “I’ll tell [my students], ‘Hey, I just discovered this last week!’ It helps to maybe take some of the pressure off of them” (I2, L186-188). Another example of transparency is the following example shared by Jack:

I went to speak to a group of at-risk freshmen students yesterday that are here on scholarship for minority economically downtrodden students... Almost the entire class was African American. I wanted them to understand, in my own way, I can speak some of their language. [I said,] “I’m a first-generation college student, biracial, conceived out of an extramarital affair, and I came out of the closet at 37 years old.” If nothing else, just them sitting there saying, “Jesus, you just said that?” That alone might say, “Well, I’ll give you props for that. I’m not big into gay guys, but good for him.” I don’t do that to impress people. I do it to convey the vulnerability... I’m standing in a suit. It may look like I have my shit together. I don’t. (I2, L1256-1276)

Zach is also transparent in the classroom and supervision. He reported, “It try to be vulnerable and open with my students. I think that’s some modeling, and allows that

process to take place” (ID2, L104-105). Participants shared a variety of pedagogical traits, ultimately rooted in social justice, multicultural, feminist approaches. Participants demonstrated their pedagogy through awareness of power, intentional language, and transparency in the classroom and supervision.

**Infusion.** The final property under the category, *Techniques*, is *Infusion*.

Infusion first emerged during round one data analysis as participants reported infusing LGBTQ+ competence throughout counselor education. During round two, limited new information emerged, yet participants’ identify infusion to be a foundational component of *Techniques* therefore it solidified as a property. All participants infuse LGBTQ+ topics throughout the classroom and supervision. Bruce finds infusion of LGBTQ+ competence to be very important. He reported, “We can’t just say, ‘Okay, today’s transgender day’” (I2, L782-783). For Bruce, infusing transgender competence throughout classes is pertinent. Infusion throughout counselor education highlights the significance of LGBTQ+ competence throughout counselor education, and not just in the diversity or multicultural course. Infusion promotes competence by focusing on previously silenced voices in every aspect of counselor education.

## **Conclusion**

The second round of data analysis was conducted in the manner of the first round and yielded a few adjustments. Round two data collection included interviews, continuous memo-writing, discourse analysis, and interpretive dialogues. The interviews and interpretive dialogues were professionally transcribed and coded. During data collection, my relationship with each participant grew and evolved. Our relationship

impacted the analysis of the research and I continually debriefed with my advisor and engaged in memo-writing to focus on the accuracy of the participant's process.

The second round of data analysis led to the following five categories: (1) *Personal and Professional Self*; (2) *Language*; (3) *Discrimination and Resistance*; (4) *Advocacy*; and, (5) *Techniques*. Each category consists of various subcategories and properties. The *Round Two LGBTQ+ Competent Project Map* (Figure 5.10) is a result of round two data analysis. The participants determined the *Round Two LGBTQ+ Competent Project Map* (Figure 5.10) aligned with their process of being LGBTQ+ competent counselor educators and will maintain as the final project map. Within the final chapter, I will finalize the meaning of each category and property.

## Chapter VI

## Situational Analysis of LGBTQ+ Competent Counselor Educators

**Introduction**

The current study provides a framework for counselor educators to infuse LGBTQ+ competence throughout counselor education. Despite the ethical requirement for counselors to be LGBTQ+ competent, previous to this study, there was no agreed upon definition of LGBTQ+ competence or clear consensus to implement LGBTQ+ competence within a counselor education program. Using a queer theory philosophical perspective, the results of the investigation provide a comprehensive, detailed understanding of participants' experiences and processes of infusing LGBTQ+ competence throughout counselor education and becoming LGBTQ+ competent. As queer theorist, Pinar (2009), stated, "The closet is being emptied... practices and theories are being challenged, and... new [theories] formulated" (p. 2). The emergent *LGBTQ+ Competent Project Map* (figure 6.10) is one such new theory as a result of co-construction between the researcher and LGBTQ+ competent counselor education participants.

Seven self-identified LGBTQ+ competent and affirming counselor educators engaged in this study exploring the process of infusing LGBTQ+ competence throughout counselor education. Purposeful selection and maximum variation increased variation of the diversity of processes and meanings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Maximum variation was achieved in terms of gender identity, race, ethnicity, age, experience within counselor education, affectional orientation, spiritual and religious identity, and geographic region. Of the seven participants, five identified as men and two identified as

women. Six of the participants are cisgender and one is transgender. Four of the participants identified as White, one as Eastern European, one as Mexican Caucasian, and one as Asian American. Participant ages ranged from mid 30s to mid 50s, and the amount of years experience within counselor education ranged from four years to 20 years. Affectional orientation included one lesbian, four gay men, one bisexual woman, and one heterosexual participant. Spiritual and religious affiliations included Christian, Catholic, Native American spirituality, agnostic, and no affiliation. Geographic regions included Western ACES, Southern ACES, Rocky Mountain ACES, and North Central ACES. Within maximum variation knowledge is created by participants' ontological perspectives by highlighting the spectrum of experiences and understanding (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Corbin & Strauss, 2014). Participants' stories explore power relationships, deconstruct identity categories, and challenge the notion of a single perspective of knowledge through unraveling the voices of each LGBTQ+ competent participant. Participants' high level of insight and dedication to the research allowed for an in-depth understanding of the process to becoming LGBTQ+ competent.

Grounded theory in conjunction with situational analysis guided the data collection and analysis procedures, including two rounds of interviews, two interpretive dialogue sessions, continual memo-writing, and discourse analysis. Grounded theory explores the meaning arising through relationships between people, cultural factors, and society (Blumer, 1969; Nelson & Poulin, 1997). Each interview lasted approximately one hour and the interpretive dialogue sessions ranged from 30 minutes to over one hour. The interviews and interpretive dialogues provided opportunities to gain rich understandings of participant experiences and processes as embedded within the context

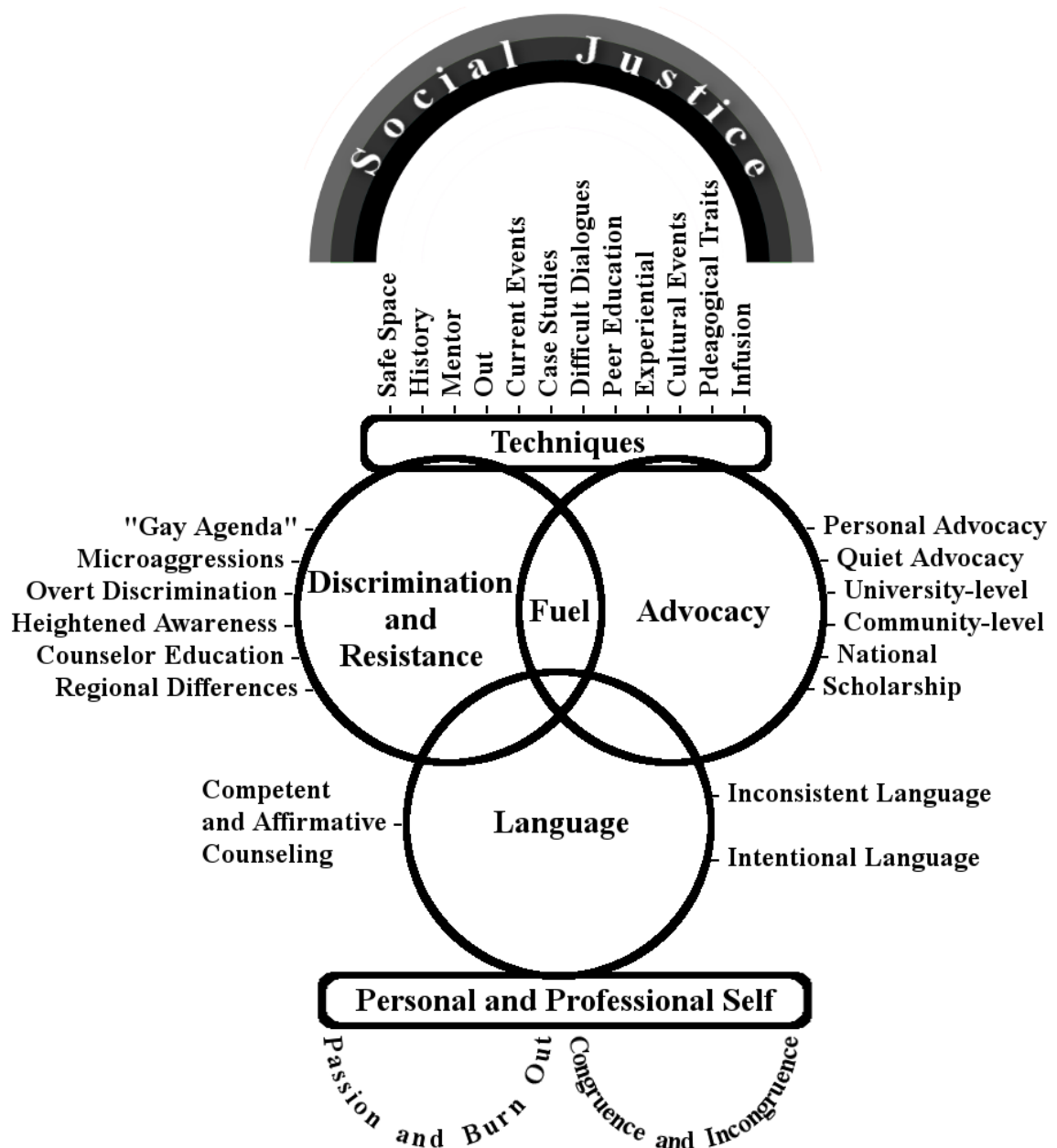
of the situation (Clarke, 2005). The audio recorded interviews and interpretive dialogues were professionally transcribed and reviewed for accuracy to prepare for data analysis. Memo-writing was continuous throughout the data collection. Discourse analysis included gathering materials based on the interviews.

Initial and focused coding of the transcribed interviews and interpretive dialogue sessions resulted in various situational maps, social worlds/arenas maps, and positional maps. The maps provided opportunities to analyze the data from different perspectives. Situational maps are maps that “lay out the major human, nonhuman... cultural, political and other elements in the research situation of concern” (Clarke, 2015, p. 133). Next, social worlds/arenas maps “lay out all of the collective [participants]” (Clarke, 2015, p. 133). Positional maps represent positions based on participants’ language and understanding of the situation. The maps address the following questions: Why is this research important? What are important elements of the research? (Clarke, 2005). Project maps are the final products of combining situational maps, social worlds/arenas maps, and positional maps are based directly from the codes used in grounded theory (Clarke, 2005). In this study, the situation of focus was further understanding LGBTQ+ competent faculty’s process of integrating LGBTQ+ competence throughout counselor education in order to establish an emergent theory. Further, the study explored LGBTQ+ competent faculty’s process of becoming LGBTQ+ competent.

The *LGBTQ+ Competent Project Map* is the result of data collection and analysis. Round two of data analysis revealed five categories comprising the *LGBTQ+ Competent Project Map*, including (1) *Personal and Professional Self*, (2) *Language*, (3) *Discrimination and Resistance*, (4) *Advocacy*, and (5), *Techniques*. *Personal and*

*Professional Self* is the foundation for each participant, while *Language* impacts their worldview. Experiences of *Discrimination and Resistance* fuels *Advocacy*, and *Techniques* are the practical approaches used by participants in the classroom and supervision. The *LGBTQ+ Competent Project Map* (Figure 6.10) is a visual representation of the process captured during the current study.

Figure 6.10. LGBTQ+ Competent Project Map





The process begins with an understanding of *Personal and Professional Self*. Participants experienced passion for infusing LGBTQ+ competence throughout counselor education. The passion coincides with personal connection with LGBTQ+ identity and communities. Simultaneously, participants worked more hours than heterosexual and cisgender non-LGBTQ+ competent colleagues and experienced discrimination and resistance leading to burnout. In addition, some participants experienced congruence with their personal and professional selves, and others experienced incongruence, often related to a religious or spiritual identity, and leading to internalized shame.

Participants expressed an understanding of *Language*, specifically acknowledging competent and affirmative language, inconsistent language, and intentional language is a foundational piece of becoming LGBTQ+ competent. *Language* is the framework of one's worldview and is based on situational contexts, including culture, intersectionality, environmental context, region, and generation, as well as relationships of power, identity, and understanding of knowledge.

*Discrimination and Resistance* impacted counselor educators LGBTQ+ competence. Participants experienced microaggressions, overt discrimination, and heightened awareness of their personal identity. Further, students and colleagues occasionally perceived LGBTQ+ competent counselor educators as asserting a "gay agenda." Participants experienced challenges within counselor education as well as a variation of support based on the region. Finally, participants found experiences of personal and professional discrimination and resistance as fuel for advocacy.

*Discrimination and Resistance* fueled participants to advocate on behalf of LGBTQ+ competence. This is done at many levels, including personal advocacy, quiet

advocacy, university level advocacy, community level advocacy, national advocacy, and scholarship. Participants infused LGBTQ+ competence through advocacy at various levels throughout their personal and professional environments.

Participants infused LGBTQ+ competence within the classroom and supervision through a variety of *Techniques*. The techniques included the following: Providing a safe space, discussing LGBTQ+ history, being a mentor, being out as LGBTQ+, using current events, including LGBTQ+ case studies, engaging in difficult dialogues, utilizing peer education, infusing experiential activities, cultural events, intentional pedagogical traits, and infusion of LGBTQ+ competence throughout the classroom and supervision.

The *LGBTQ+ Competent Project Map* (figure 6.10) provides a visual of the process of participants infusing LGBTQ+ competence throughout counselor education. The map is an emergent new theory, and a result of co-construction between the researcher and LGBTQ+ competent counselor education participants.

### **Trustworthiness**

Trustworthiness and credibility are standards of verification in the quality of research (Creswell, 2007). In qualitative inquiry, the researcher is the tool for gathering data, analyzing the data, and interpreting the data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Maxwell, 2005). Trustworthiness is a validity criteria to address credibility and includes multiple elements, such as addressing researcher reflexivity and bias (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007), audit trails, interpretive dialogues (Coe Smith, 2007), and prolonged engagement (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Researcher reflexivity was addressed from a queer theoretical lens to acknowledge multiple perspectives of knowledge and ways of understanding. In order to

address researcher reflexivity and bias, I utilized memo-writing continuously. Memo-writing challenged my assumptions and acknowledged my beliefs, values, and biases impacting the research and participant reactivity (Charmaz, 2014; Clarke, 2005).

Charmaz states, “We are part of the world we study, the data we collect, and the analyses we produce. We construct our grounded theories through our past and present involvements and interactions with people, perspectives, and research practices” (2014, p. 17). Throughout the study, I was influenced by the vulnerability and experiences my participants shared. Each participant shared cherished details of their life, highlighting the depth and insight each participant provided to the study. As a gay woman in a doctoral counselor education program and having experienced a variety of oppressive and discriminatory encounters as a marginalized person, participants’ experiences and processes directly relate to my present situation of focus. I relate to many of the participants’ experiences on both personal and professional levels and am energized by the inspiring and meaningful work in which they are engaged. I processed my personal reactions and experiences through memo-writing and consistently reflected on reactions and experiences to address researcher reflexivity.

Simultaneously, I utilized audit trails by engaging in weekly meetings with the chair of my dissertation committee, Dr. Elizabeth Horn, to discuss my thoughts, feelings, ideas, and experiences throughout the research process (Charmaz, 2014; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Dr. Horn questioned various aspects of the research to ensure the methodology employed lead to a fair representation of participants. I shared my personal reactions and process with Dr. Horn to increase researcher reflexivity. Further, I consulted with my

committee to examine the assumptions and bias of the research. Triangulation provided the opportunity to reduce bias impacting the research (Denzin, 1978).

Interpretive dialogue (Coe Smith, 2007) sessions provided participants the opportunity to co-construct meaning of the data. During the interpretive dialogue sessions, participants were asked to confirm or contradict my interpretation of the data, thus assisting in the development of a dynamic, evolving theory. Participants were involved in the data analysis and made changes to the situational maps, social/world maps, and positional maps. This strategy empowered participants and increased integrity and credibility of the study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Finally, trustworthiness was ensured throughout the study through prolonged engagement (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Prolonged engagement refers to the investment of adequate time to achieve the study. Throughout data collection and analysis, I was completely immersed in the data. Data collection took place over a six-month period and resulted in over 23 hours of audio-recorded dialogue from the seven participants. Prolonged engagement led to saturation of data, resulting in completion of the data collection (Charmaz, 2014; Clarke, 2005). The following narrative describes the process of self-identified LGBTQ+ competent faculty infusing LGBTQ+ competence throughout counselor education.

### **Implications**

The *LGBTQ+ Competent Project Map* (figure 6.10) is a compilation of participants' processes and researcher collaboration. The interpretations of the data were continuously co-constructed and confirmed with each participant to ensure accuracy and precision of their descriptions. As the LGBTQ+ community continues to endure

oppression and discrimination, the *LGBTQ+ Competent Project Map* will benefit the field of counselor education by providing insight into the process of LGBTQ+ competent counselor educators. The process may be a framework for all counselor educators to become LGBTQ+ competent and advocate for the marginalized LGBTQ+ population. Figure 6.10 provides a visual representation of the process from the emerging *LGBTQ+ Competent Project Map* captured during the study.

**Personal and professional self.** Participants identified the importance of their personal and professional self within their process of becoming LGBTQ+ competent. Participants' situational context of their personal and professional life greatly impacts the congruence or dissonance of becoming LGBTQ+ competent. Included in their situational context is culture, intersectionality of identities, environmental context, region, and generation. The situational context impacts passion, burnout, minority stress, and internalized shame.

They acknowledged that the personal nature of the issues surrounding LGBTQ+ individuals fostered a passion beyond counselor education. Participants were personally invested in advocating for LGBTQ+ equality as well as basic human rights for all marginalized populations. Counselor educators need to be aware becoming LGBTQ+ competent may impact personhood, as participants discussed how this topic continued and even became more heightened as part of their identity. Participants indicated when their personal passion served as an impetus for work, they expressed joy in their professional life and a sense of accomplishment, one fueling the other. For some, however, personal passion became an impetus for burnout and stress, affecting various aspects of their life and well-being.

Participants' burnout resulted from a number of factors, including lack of support from colleagues, lack of awareness of heteronormativity within the department, and microaggressive comments. In comparison to heterosexual and cisgender colleagues, participants were often asked to work longer hours and serve on more committees due to the high need. While participants' passion motivated the extra work, the result was burnout. Burnout leads to impairment of the counselor educator (Bradley, Whinsenhunt, Adamson, & Kress, 2013), and possibly minority stress. Many participants experienced minority stress as a process of repetitive heteronormative, transphobic undercurrents. The stress and burnout weighs on participants, resulting in less effective teaching, supervising, scholarship, and advocacy. LGBTQ+ competent counselor educators need to be aware of the potential for burnout and be mindful to set boundaries.

Similarly, some participants' personal selves are not congruent with their professional selves. Incongruence may be experienced due to contrasting personal identities, such as religion or spirituality and sexuality or gender identity. The process of balancing personal and professional values leads some participants to experience dissonance and internalized shame. Participants who experience internalized shame are burdened with heaviness, which bleeds into their work as counselor educators.

Allies could be one avenue to reduce the process of burnout, minority stress, and internalized shame that current LGBTQ+ competent faculty endure. With more LGBTQ+ competent counselor educators, there will be more LGBTQ+ support and affirmation within counselor education, leading to greater competency in the field and therefore less burnout and minority stress. While LGBTQ+ counselor educators' personal identity impacts their passion for LGBTQ+ competence, heterosexual and

cisgender counselor educators are in a position of power and privilege to demonstrate passion and awareness regarding LGBTQ+ issues. The responsibility for LGBTQ+ competence cannot solely burden LGBTQ+ counselor educators. Instead, all counselor educators must be LGBTQ+ competent to infuse LGBTQ+ competence throughout counselor education to reduce oppression and discrimination among LGBTQ+ communities, meet ethical requirements of the counseling profession, and spread awareness.

**Language.** Participants' ontological perspectives varied based on situational context and worldview, including relationships of power, identity categories, and unraveling knowledge. Participants' process of becoming LGBTQ+ competent began with self-awareness of their situational context and worldview, which is impacted by language. Language is the eye through which the world is viewed. Over time, participants have developed further insight and awareness of themselves and the language they use to see the world.

Participants LGBTQ+ competence developed through awareness and intentionality of language, challenging traditional language, and understanding the movement of language. Traditional language, such as binary gendered language, is confronted and transgressed. Participants consistently maintain up-to-date on current language and are aware of the continual evolution of language. Participants are flexible with the movement of language and recognize how cultural norms impact language, such as heteronormativity, transphobia, patriarchy, and racism. Language produces boxes and limitations, therefore participants dismantle the hierarchal system of oppression through

language. The consistent undercurrents of oppressive language are unintentional and negatively impede all aspects of being.

Further, language signals competence and incompetence based on the words intentionally chosen by the participant. While participants' process of understanding *competent counseling* varies, there are overriding themes. The following definition of LGBTQ+ competent counseling was co-constructed by participants and researcher by reviewing participants' positions of LGBTQ+ competent counseling during interpretive dialogues. The definition provides a foundation for LGBTQ+ competence in counselor education:

LGBTQ+ competent counseling involves awareness, knowledge, and skills for LGBTQ+ populations, advocating with and on behalf of LGBTQ+ communities, and following the *ALGBTIC Transgender Competencies* and the *ALGBTIC LGBQQIA Competencies* (2009; 2013). Further, LGBTQ+ competent counseling is a continual process and movement.

Counselor educators can remain abreast on language by attending professional LGBTQ+ conferences, visiting reputable LGBTQ+ websites, and being part of community-based LGBTQ+ groups. Conferences to attend include the *Human Rights Campaign Time to Thrive* annual conference and the ALGBTIC biannual conference. Reputable LGBTQ+ websites, such as the *Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation* (GLAAD) website or the APA LGBTQ+ terminology website, are options to reference regarding current LGBTQ+ language. Finally, being immersed within local LGBTQ+ communities provides the opportunity to experience LGBTQ+ current language and further understand oppression through language by societal barriers and boxes.



**Discrimination, resistance, and advocacy.** Participants have endured discrimination and resistance due to heterosexism, transphobia, heteronormativity, and social injustices. These negative experiences have inspired participants to advocate with and on behalf of LGBTQ+ competence to reduce systemic oppression. Participants' process of becoming LGBTQ+ competent includes oppressive experiences of discrimination and resistance.

Within counselor education, participants often have endured assumptions asserting a "gay agenda" when infusing LGBTQ+ competence. Participants have countless examples of supposed "gay agendas" within the classroom, supervision, and faculty meetings. Participants who found their appearance to "out" their affectional identity, such as those who "look gay" based on stereotypes, had more examples of "gay agendas." This potentially implies the more "gay" someone looks, the stronger their "gay agenda." The misconception of a "gay agenda" boxes participants by limiting authenticity.

Participants' experiences of tokenism included both positive and negative aspects of being the token LGBTQ+ counselor educator. Positive implications included being recognized and seen as a leader on LGBTQ+ topics. Being the token, out LGBTQ+ counselor educator increases visibility of LGBTQ+ individuals. On the other hand, negative implications include being reduced to a single part of an entire identity and therefore not being recognized for other areas of expertise. Participants felt tokenism limits their full capability. Similar to the "gay agenda," tokenism boxes participants by limiting authenticity and forcing barriers to prohibit potential.

Participants endured overt discrimination as well. Examples included a transgender counselor educator being asked his “real name,” a gay counselor educator told he should not work with children because he is gay, and a gay counselor educator told he would never be hired as a school counselor because of his sexuality. These negative experiences are part of participants’ process of becoming LGBTQ+ competent by increasing awareness of oppressive systems. It seems important for counselor educators to recognize and combat overt discrimination as part of becoming LGBTQ+ competent.

The process of participants’ infusing LGBTQ+ competence throughout counselor education included occasional resistance from counselors-in-training (CITs). Participants encountered resistant CITs who were not open to becoming LGBTQ+ competent. CITs who identified with a religion or spirituality unsupportive of LGBTQ+ equality seemed to have further challenges separating personal values from professional ethics. Participants noted it was important to challenge students to acknowledge their personal values and how they impact the counseling relationship. They also suggested guiding students to unpack their personal beliefs and values of LGBTQ+ people by engaging in difficult dialogues, group discussions, journaling, and supervision.

In addition, participants endured discrimination and resistance within the university. Examples included being told they could be fired for being gay, being told they are “too gay” and talk about “gay topics” too often, and being told not to publish exclusively on LGBTQ+ scholarly works. Counseling departments can support LGBTQ+ counselor educators by providing equal rights for all employees, supporting LGBTQ+ topics within the classroom and supervision, and encouraging LGBTQ+

scholarship. LGBTQ+ heterosexual and cisgender allies are in positions of power to ensure such policies are placed and practiced.

Regional differences impacted experiences of discrimination and resistance. The location of the university and the contextual situation of the surrounding environment impacted participants' process. Supportive, affirmative environments endorse and practice LGBTQ+ equality and provide LGBTQ+ resources. Counseling departments can support LGBTQ+ counselor educators by providing support for LGBTQ+ students and faculty, including endorsing diversity mission statements, using gender-neutral language, and celebrating diversity.

Finally, participants' process of discrimination and resistance fueled their motivation for advocacy. Personal and professional experiences of oppression and discrimination increased these counselor educators understanding of the importance of equal human rights. Their passion for LGBTQ+ advocacy often resulted from the pain experienced through discrimination, highlighting how discrimination and resistance impacted participants' process to infuse competency throughout counselor education. Participants' personal connection heightened their awareness and understanding of the oppression, injustices, and trauma endured by LGBTQ+ individuals. The oppressive boxes hindered participants, as it does the LGBTQ+ community at large. Participants recognized this at a deep, personal level and continually fight for justice. Counselor educators who seek to become LGBTQ+ competent need to be aware of how the cycle of discrimination and resistance can become a powerful motivator for advocacy, not only in their professional life, but also within their personhood.

Participants connected to personal advocacy, such as approaching people in public who use anti-LGBTQ+ language and attending Pride festivals, as a demonstration of LGBTQ+ competency within their personal life. Participants identified personal advocacy as part of their personhood. Participants also engaged in quiet advocacy, such as having LGBTQ+ symbols in the counseling department and office, posting LGBTQ+ equality messages on social media, and writing letters to government officials on LGBTQ+ topics. University level advocacy included serving on LGBTQ+ committees, providing LGBTQ+ trainings, or providing scholarships for LGBTQ+ students in the counseling department. Participants supported community advocacy by volunteering at LGBTQ+ counseling centers, providing LGBTQ+ trainings for local schools, and increasing services for local low-income LGBTQ+ communities. Many participants were involved in LGBTQ+ advocacy at the national level by holding leadership positions in ALGBTIC and infusing LGBTQ+ awareness in other national organizations, such as the ACA and the *National Board of Certified Counselors* (NBCC). Participants believed in the importance of providing LGBTQ+ competent services as well as the danger of not providing these services. Therefore each participant was invested in advocating at all levels in their personal and professional lives. They were intentional about staying at the forefront of the societal movement towards LGBTQ+ equality. It may be helpful for counselor educators who wish to become LGBTQ+ competent to understand advocacy within and outside of the classroom is necessary.

It seems the various platforms of advocacy must be supported by heterosexual and cisgender counselor educators. Heterosexual and cisgender counselor educators are in positions of power and privilege by identifying with dominant affectional and gender

identities, therefore having the ability to be effective allies for marginalized LGBTQ+ counselor educators. Allies can dismantle the boxes LGBTQ+ counselor educators experience as tokens and promoting “gay agendas” through action at the various levels of advocacy. At the personal level, allies can immerse themselves in LGBTQ+ communities, including supporting LGBTQ+-owned businesses and becoming friends with LGBTQ+ individuals. At the quiet level, allies can consider how whom they vote for will impact LGBTQ+ equality. Allies can engage in university-level advocacy by advocating for gender-neutral restrooms and making sure the university allows students to use the restroom aligning with their gender identity. Allies can join the *Parents, Families, Friends, and Allies United with LGBTQ People* (PFLAG; n.d.) local chapter to show support at the community level. To demonstrate LGBTQ+ competence at the national level, allies can join ALGBTIC and attend the biannual ALGBTIC conference. By infusing LGBTQ+ competence throughout all levels of advocacy, allies challenge the oppressive heteronormative system LGBTQ+ counselor educators face.

A component of participants’ process was an effort to increase LGBTQ+ competency by engaging in LGBTQ+ scholarship as a form of advocacy. While LGBTQ+ scholarship is important, it is often difficult to publish in ACA tier one, peer review academic journals (Singh & Shelton, 2011). This may be a result of journal editorial boards not wanting to be perceived as controversial or political, which is a point of resistance for LGBTQ+ competent counselor educators. It is important to point out that publishing LGBTQ+ scholarship in tier one, peer-reviewed journals, requires innovative, high quality, ground-breaking, yet unbiased and neutral research. This is frequently difficult given the seemingly controversial nature of the issues and the passion

they inspire. However, LGBTQ+ competent counselor educators often need to publish within such journals to attain tenure and promotion. The discrepancy can add additional challenges and barriers with achieving LGBTQ+ competence.

Further, there is limited accessibility for ACA subscription academic journals based on their high cost (Lorimer, 2014; Schekman, 2013). Readership of ACA journals tends to be counselor educators and CITs, while counseling professionals lack access (dickey, Hendricks, & Bockting, 2016). Counseling professionals may read magazines, such as *Counseling Today*, or websites more often. Unfortunately, such publications do not usually count towards tenure and promotion and may not reflect high quality research. Participants indicated they sought to increase LGBTQ+ scholarship. They were able to do this by finding outlets to provide public access to research, such as through presentations, publishing results on open-access websites, and publishing in high readership magazines.

While there are still many barriers, changes are being made through advocacy. The counseling profession and counselor educators can become more competent and remain abreast of societal movements by supporting and celebrating LGBTQ+ scholarly works. Allies can further support movement by focusing research toward LGBTQ+ issues, and departments could reexamine their tenure and promotion policies to ensure LGBTQ+ scholarship is appropriately recognized. Counselor educators may begin to challenge traditional ways of seeking and presenting research in order to provide more access for professionals and increase competence.

**Techniques.** LGBTQ+ competent counselor education is imperative as LGBTQ+ competent counseling increases awareness and equality among LGBTQ+ clients.

Counselor educators are leaders in the counseling field and are ethically responsible for educating CITs to become LGBTQ+ competent. A component of participants' process was the infusion of LGBTQ+ *Techniques* throughout all aspects of counselor education. As recommended by participants, counselor educators wishing to increase LGBTQ+ competence may replicate the following techniques to use in the classroom and supervision: Providing a safe space, discussing LGBTQ+ history, being a mentor, being out as LGBTQ+ or ally, using current events, including LGBTQ+ case studies, engaging in difficult dialogues, utilizing peer education, infusing experiential activities, cultural events, intentional pedagogical traits, and infusion of LGBTQ+ competence throughout the classroom and supervision. These techniques increase CITs' LGBTQ+ competence.

***Safe space.*** A first step to creating safe spaces is the use of intentional language. The use of intentional language signals competence, awareness, and sensitivity towards LGBTQ+ issues. Participants modeled current, respectful language and encouraged students to be responsible and aware of the language they use and how it impacts others. As mentioned previously, situational contexts, including identity, culture, and environment, impacts the use and understanding of language. As such, participants utilized the *ALGBTIC LGBQQIA Competencies* (2013) and the *ALGBTIC Transgender Competencies* (2009) to increase student awareness, knowledge, and skills of LGBTQ+ populations while recognizing one never fully attains competence. Participants highlighted outdated language so counseling students could increase awareness.

Participants' focus on a safe space began with asking students to create group norms or a general code of conduct. They believed this was a way to set standards of

safety and inclusivity while empowering students. These norms or code of conduct was then integrated into syllabi.

Further, participants demonstrated a safe space by having LGBTQ+ symbolic visuals present. Counselor educators can have Safe Space stickers or rainbows in their office, department, and classroom. Visuals can be purchased through resources such as the *Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Educator Network* (GLSEN; n.d.) or the *PFLAG* (n.d.), including additional outlets within local communities.

Another way counselor educators can provide a safe space for counseling students is to require attendance at LGBTQ+ trainings. Some universities provide free Safe Space Trainings, or community organizations may provide other free LGBTQ+ trainings. Another option includes reaching out to the state ALGBTIC chapter to offer a training. In such trainings, students learn about LGBTQ+ definitions, language, and basic knowledge about LGBTQ+ communities. Students also engage in a self-awareness activity to increase awareness of personal value and biases towards LGBTQ+ communities.

**History.** Participants discussed the importance of the use of the history of the marginalization of LGBTQ+ people within their process of becoming LGBTQ+ competent.. They frequently introduced topics such as the roots of conversion therapy and how “homosexuality” was previously in the *DSM* within the classroom and supervision. Similarly, education on the previous diagnosis of gender identity disorder and the current diagnosis of gender dysphoria was be introduced to counseling students.

One way for counselor educators to introduce LGBTQ+ history is to assign a LGBTQ+ history book as a class reading. The students first read the book on their own,



and then discuss the book in small groups in class. Each person in the group is assigned a different role, including the following: (a) Identify major concepts that relate to the main textbook from the readings, (b) Consider the text from a pre-1973 perspective, (c) Consider the text from a current day perspective, and (d) Consider the text from a future perspective, specifically regarding human rights. The various activities provide opportunities for counseling students to increase LGBTQ+ competence through understanding LGBTQ+ history.

**Mentor.** Participants identified mentorship of students as part of their process of becoming LGBTQ+ competent, especially when they could mentor LGBTQ+ students. Participants provided socioemotional mentorship for LGBTQ+ CITs through guidance and support. Participants used personal experiences to support LGBTQ+, heterosexual, and cisgender CITs becoming LGBTQ+ competent. Research demonstrates those who have strong relationships with LGBTQ+ individuals and allies emerge as LGBTQ+ allies. Counselor educators who want to be LGBTQ+ competent should embrace the role of mentor as a vehicle to further competence. Encouraging students to explore LGBTQ+ issues within the classroom, supervision, and within their own scholarship may help students better understand their LGBTQ+ clients. As mentors, counselor educators can also help students increase competence by sharing their personal experiences with discrimination or as an ally.

**Out.** All participants noted being out as LGBTQ+ or ally was an integral part of their process and encourage other LGBTQ+ counselor educators to be out if in a safe environment or work on fostering one. Participants' shared personal experiences of

oppression with students given these normalize LGBTQ+ people and confront heterosexism and transphobia. Out faculty can build trust and understanding for CITs.

On the other hand, heterosexual, cisgender counselor educators are in a position of power to increase equity by demonstrating support for LGBTQ+ people as allies. For example, counselor educators can use gender-neutral language when referring to spouses. Heterosexual and cisgender counselor educators can discuss their dominant identity and position of power in both the classroom and supervision. The open, transparent dialogue may provide opportunities of growth for CITs by increasing awareness and understanding of oppression and discrimination, specifically focusing on how CITs impact clients.

***Current events.*** Participants indicated infusing LGBTQ+ current events within the classroom and supervision was part of their process of becoming competent. The awareness and discussion of current events can foster empathy and ground CITs in real world examples. One way counselor educators can use current events is to have a weekly assignment for students to bring in a current event to discuss how it may impact clients or the counseling profession. Counselor educators can ask students to specifically bring in an LGBTQ+ topic at least one time over the course of the semester. Examples include discussions on proposed legislation of biological sex versus gender identity determining public bathroom usage or wedding officiants' refusal to marry same-sex couples. The activity could stimulate class discussion on current events impacting the counseling profession. Such topics provide the opportunity for CITs to explore their values and biases regarding LGBTQ+ communities. Infusing current events within the classroom and supervision increases CITs understanding of self, the importance of advocacy, and how current events translate into clinical work as emerging counselors.

*Case studies.* Participants indicated the use LGBTQ+ case studies within the classroom and supervision was part of their process. Case studies included the wide spectrum of sexualities and gender identities to increase counseling students LGBTQ+ competence. Case studies may include same-sex couples, a transgender family member, or a young person coming out as queer. Previous literature indicates 88% of counselors will work with LGB clients and encounter at least one transgender client in their career at some point in their career (Carroll & Gilroy, 2001; Graham, Carney & Kluck, 2012). Participants indicated case studies can be a way to help students conceptualize LGBTQ+ clients. They can become a way to more accurately empathize with clients and therefore utilize more effective techniques.

One way counselor educators can do this in the classroom is to provide students with the following case study:

Sam has scheduled a first appointment with you and is in the waiting room. Sam appears to be around 20 years old, has brown hair, and wears androgynous clothing. You invite Sam to sit down and begin to review the intake form. Part of your intake includes checking the box for “male” or “female.” Sam has not checked either box.

Counselor educators can then ask CITs to discuss next steps in pairs. After students have reflected with a partner about what they would do, counselor educators can invite a large group discussion. If students do not address the limitations of having only “male” and “female” on the intake form, counselor educators can introduce the idea of challenging the binary system by having a blank space to allow clients to write their own identity. Further, counselor educators can introduce students to asking clients about their preferred

pronoun. Case studies like the one above can provide opportunities for counselor educators to infuse LGBTQ+ competence in the classroom and supervision.

***Difficult dialogues.*** Participants recognized the need for difficult dialogues as part of their process of becoming LGBTQ+ competent. They challenged CITs' biases and assumptions of LGBTQ+ communities. They were open and willing to engage in difficult discussions to challenge student thinking and reflection to foster learning and growth. They believed difficult dialogues could increase CITs' insight challenge their understanding of knowledge, and transgress boxes of binary thinking.

For example, counselor educators may introduce the *Ward v. Wilbanks* case involving the counseling student who was dismissed from her counseling program because she refused to work with a gay client (Hutchens, Block, & Young, 2013; Kaplan, 2014). Counselor educators can begin class with a lecture presenting the facts of the legal case and then pose questions regarding implications. Challenging students to consider difficult situations from multiple perspectives may increase critical thinking and awareness of personal beliefs and biases which ultimately impacts their professional abilities to meet ethical standards.

***Peer education.*** Participants felt peer education was part of their process. Peer education includes CITs sharing their experiences and knowledge in the classroom. Their belief was CITs have knowledge and experiences from which peers may learn. At times, participants noted, it was better to allow peers to contradict or challenge microaggressions or discriminatory thinking. They also conceived peer education as the seeds of advocacy. Counselor educators are able to provide the opportunity for CITs to

share by creating safe spaces and encouraging participation. CITs may educate each other on LGBTQ+ competence within the classroom.

***Experiential.*** Participants' process was impacted by the use of experiential activities in the classroom and supervision. They designed activities to expand CITs' awareness, knowledge, and skills. At times, participants had CITs role-play counseling sessions and ensured the role-plays included LGBTQ+ clients. One way counselor educators can use experiential activities is to ask students to role-play a family with a transgender child, a same-sex couple, or an older gay client. The role-plays could conclude with a class discussion on the experience, expanding on how LGBTQ+ competence can support clients.

Another possible activity utilizes a "fishbowl." Specially, three students can sit in the middle of a circle to provide the following experiential example in the classroom while the rest of the class sits in a circle outside of the inner circle to observe the following role-play:

The three students in the middle role-play two clients and a counselor. The two clients are a lesbian couple together for ten years. The counselor has never worked with a lesbian couple before. Lisa initiated counseling because she is feeling distant from Candice, who is working longer hours than ever before.

Candice reports stress at work and Lisa discusses frustration due to a decrease in time spent together. Candice feels uncomfortable with Lisa's openness and stops talking.

After a three-minute role-play, the class then reflects on what they observed. Specifically, counselor educators can ask the student observers, "What did you observe? How did the

counselor demonstrate LGBTQ+ competence? What would you do demonstrate LGBTQ+ competence?” The fish-bowl activity can provide a safe space for CITs to explore LGBTQ+ competence in a specific situation.

***Cultural events.*** Participants indicated the use of cultural events within the classroom was a part of their process of becoming LGBTQ+ competent. Cultural events can increase students’ personal experiences with LGBTQ+ communities. Participants included cultural immersion activities in their coursework by having students lead *Gay Straight Alliances* (GSA’s), inviting guest speakers into the classroom, and assigning students to be involved in community engagement. They believed cultural events expand students beyond their comfort zone thus creating more understanding and ultimately safe spaces.

Cultural immersion experiences include CITs becoming immersed within a culture other than their own to increase CITs’ worldviews. One way counselor educators can utilize cultural events is to invite students to attend a PFLAG group or a transgender support group. Other activities include requiring CITs to visit LGBTQ+ community centers, LGBTQ+ bookstores, and LGBTQ+-run businesses, such as coffee shops. After attending the meeting or visiting a LGBTQ+-owned establishment, CITs may write a journal reflection on their experience. CITs can then share their experiences with the class in order to provide insight for others to learn from.

CITs may also become group facilitators for GSA’s. Counseling students may increase LGBTQ+ competence by working directly with LGBTQ+ student populations. They can build empathy and learn about LGBTQ+ youth when working directly in

schools. It may even be possible to facilitate transgender-specific groups at schools as the transgender youth population continues to grow.

Participants invited LGBTQ+ guest speakers into the classroom to increase counseling students exposure to LGBTQ+ populations. Another option is to assign students to interview someone who identifies as LGBTQ+ or a counselor who specializes in counseling the LGBTQ+ community. After the guest speaker or the interview, students could write a reflection paper on their experience and engage in a class discussion about their experience to further the dialogue and increase competence.

Finally, community engagement is defined as being immersed within a population. Community engagement is a step beyond cultural immersion. Community engagement includes volunteering consistently at a local LGBTQ+ resource center, being engaged in the LGBTQ+ community, and working collaboratively with LGBTQ+ communities. LGBTQ+ competent counselor educators encourage students to expand their comfort zone by engaging in communities unlike their own.

***Pedagogical traits.*** Participants shared a variety of pedagogical traits, including feminist approaches as transparent counselor educators with a social justice lens and believed this to be an important component of their process of becoming LGBTQ+ competent. Participants were aware of the power held as the instructor of a class or supervisor in supervision, and utilized a feminist philosophy to decrease the power differential. Participants advocated with and on behalf of LGBTQ+ communities as a demonstration of social justice both professionally and personally.

A suggestion for counselor educators to demonstrate feminist philosophy is to teach sitting in a circle with students. Classroom circles can promote equity as students

interact with each other and showcase the teacher being on the same physical level. This seminar-style classroom can promote egalitarianism and focuses on the process of optimal learning.

**Infusion.** Participants discussed the importance of infusing LGBTQ+ competence throughout the classroom and supervision as part of their process. They did this through the various techniques stated previously. Counselor educators can consistently refer to the *ALGBTIC Transgender Competencies* (2009) and the *ALGBTIC LGBQQIA Competencies* (2013) as a guideline. Simultaneously, counselor educators must remain at the forefront of LGBTQ+ competence in order to consistently educate counseling students to meet ethical standards and the changing landscape of LGBTQ+ communities.

### **Limitations**

The current research presents a comprehensive situational analysis of the process of LGBTQ+ competent faculty members infusing LGBTQ+ competence throughout counselor education. Efforts to increase trustworthiness were continually utilized throughout the entirety of the research through addressing researcher reflexivity and bias (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007), audit trails, interpretive dialogues (Coe Smith, 2006), and prolonged engagement (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

As noted in chapter two, my hope was to achieve maximum variation within counselor educators. I experienced difficulty finding a counselor educator who was out as transgender, therefore one participant is a counseling psychologist. Despite having a different background, this participant works as a counselor educator and has contributed immensely to the current research.



An unexpected limitation included data collection of discourse analysis. There were several instances throughout the study where participants reflected on personal published scholarly works that would add to the current study. In order to protect confidentiality, I am unable to directly use these sources and instead summarize the scholarly works, therefore potentially losing some of the rich depth of the full piece.

### **Reflections of the Researcher**

As mentioned in chapter one, my personhood connects me with the topic of research. Queer theory is my philosophical lens, impacting how I currently view the world. Qualitative research emphasizes openness and transparency. “All writing is ‘positioned’ and within a stance. All researchers shape the writing that emerges, and qualitative researchers need to accept this interpretation and be open about it in their writing” (Creswell, 2013, p. 215). Therefore throughout the study, I memo-wrote and engaged in weekly meetings with my major advisor to reduce researcher bias and reactivity while further understanding my personal responses to the research. Several unexpected responses emerged, including my role as the researcher, my biases, boundaries around research, inclusive language, and scholarship as advocacy.

My role as a researcher is consistently evolving. The qualitative process of interviewing includes gaining vigor and insight from participants, and occasionally participants explored previously uncharted territory. Throughout the interviews, intense personal insights were attained in vulnerable capacities, sporadically leading me to naturally move into the role of the counselor. At times, I struggled to balance the roles of counselor and researcher due to my familiarity with being a counselor and the vulnerability of my participants. Simultaneously, my lack of familiarity with being a

researcher impacted my inclination towards that of counselor. Some participants were well-known to me based on their LGBTQ+ competent reputations and I had admired them for years previous to the research. This added an additional layer to the vulnerability participants shared. I was surprised by some participant's experiences of internalized shame and recognized I had assumptions of participants prior to engaging in the research. My advisor assisted me with navigating these roles and separating my assumptions as I attempted refrain from impacting my participants' responses while acknowledging the similarities between these roles.

Another unexpected development was how my own biases emerged during interviews and while analyzing data. The majority of my participants identify as religious or spiritual. Based on my personal experiences with organized religion as well as with LGBTQ+ friends and community, I held to a stereotype that LGBTQ+ people are not religious and/or spiritual. While this was true for some participants, other participants find congruence with their LGBTQ+ identity and their religion or spirituality. This caught me by surprise, and again I memo-wrote and discussed this with my advisor to reduce researcher bias and reactivity.

A further reflection of my experience with the research is the incongruence I experienced with language. As a gay woman immersed in LGBTQ+ communities, the language I am familiar and comfortable with has differences from the limited, boxed language of ivory-towered academia. The word "queer" is a daily word for me, yet many people experience negative connotations with the word therefore "LGBTQ+" is an all-inclusive term used in academia. My inability to use a word that is part of my personhood demonstrates the lack of challenge to the oppressive system counselor

educators' work in, and I fall into that trap. My hope is this research will be accessible to the masses and change the landscape of the counseling field, therefore I used the term "LGBTQ+" despite my desire to use the word queer.

This study has many areas for future research, which led me to occasionally have difficulty maintaining boundaries as I earnestly wanted to continue gathering information in an area not related to the present research question. For example, one participant works for an online university and the interviews with her continued developing down the path of exploring the differences between online and traditional campus universities. While this was explored a little bit, I put boundaries around this in order to not stray too far from the original research question. My advisor helped maintain boundaries, recommending I memo-write on areas for future research.

A final reflection as the researcher is my parallel process of the property, *Scholarship* under the category, *Advocacy*. My experience during the dissertation process includes using this scholarly work as advocacy. Further, my major advisor, my committee members, and I increased our levels of awareness regarding LGBTQ+ issues and competence. My intention is for this piece of scholarly work to reach counselors, students, counselor educators, and other helping professionals therefore demonstrating scholarship as advocacy.

### **Future Research**

The current study resulted in five categories, including (1) *Personal and Professional Self*, (2) *Language*, (3) *Discrimination and Resistance*, (4) *Advocacy*, and (5), *Techniques*. Each category has implications for future research to further explore LGBTQ+ scholarship within counselor education and will provide a platform in which to

better understand and represent more secular subsets, such as emerging transgender populations. Various qualitative and quantitative research possibilities exist for each category.

Within, *Personal and Professional Self*, future research could expand upon the current research by exploring several dichotomies within counselor education. Specifically, future research could expand upon marginalized counselor educators' experiences of passion and burnout related to personal identities. In addition, LGBTQ+ competent counselor educators who experience incongruities with their personal and professional self may experience varying degrees of internalized shame.

Counselor education could benefit from better understanding the incongruent values among personal and professional for counselor educators. For example, qualitative research exploring counselor educators whose personal values do not align with the counseling professions values may experience discrepancies and may benefit from future research. Another avenue of consideration is to examine the relationship LGBTQ+ religious or spiritual counselor educators experience in contrast to their sexuality.

*Language* emerged as a central theme. It might be helpful to explore the impact of language as a worldview among counselor educators. The LGBTQ+ competent participants in the current study had similarities and differences among their perspectives of LGBTQ+ competent counseling. Future research could continue investigating the reasoning surrounding various understandings of LGBTQ+ competent counseling. The current research began to explore situational contexts, such as generation, region, culture, and environment, impacting views and experiences of language. Given individuals have

various perspectives of knowledge, qualitative research exploring different viewpoints may provide insight for the counseling field, such as by using conversational analysis. Further, quantitative studies may explore demographic differences of interpretations of language use, such as comparing the use of different words in various demographic locations. Finally, further investigation of how counselor educators invite LGBTQ+ competent language within counselor education may benefit the counseling profession and provide guidance for other counselor educators.

Future quantitative research could include designing studies to measure counselors LGBTQ+ competence. For example, future research could use the *ALGBTIC Transgender Competences* (2009) and the *ALGBTIC LGBQQIA Competencies* (2013) as guidelines to develop a tool used to measure counselor competence. As language and communities continue to evolve, competencies and design studies must reflect the current societal needs and social justice concerns.

The third category, *Discrimination and Resistance*, has areas for future research, such as exploring the misconception of LGBTQ+ counselor educators asserting a “gay agenda” on students and colleagues. Specifically, exploring the minority stress LGBTQ+ counselor educators may endure through the false assumption of promoting a “gay agenda.” This may provide valuable insight among LGBTQ+ counselor educators. Additional exploration of LGBTQ+ microaggressions and overt discrimination within counselor education may benefit the counseling profession by increasing awareness and reducing discrimination. Some marginalized counselor educators experience tokenism, which may be viewed as a type of microaggression, therefore additional research is needed to analyze the positive and negative aspects of tokenization. As mentioned

previously, participants in the current study expressed an increase in minority stress based on experiences of discrimination and resistance, therefore continued research has the potential to provide insight regarding reducing minority stress for marginalized counselor educators.

Participants in the current study illustrated varying degrees of discrimination and resistance within counselor education. Further research could expand upon the current study by exploring more LGBTQ+ counselor educators' experiences of discrimination within counselor education. The impact of discrimination and resistance within counselor education is problematic and would provide meaningful recommendations for how counselor education can create more supportive, inclusive, and safe environments.

Within the category, *Advocacy*, future research may expand on the study by examining each type of LGBTQ+ advocacy in-depth. Participants reported engaging in various levels of LGBTQ+ advocacy. Future research could explore benefits of LGBTQ+ advocacy at each level, specifically within scholarship. Future research could also focus on visibility and accessibility within LGBTQ+ scholarship in counselor education.

Participants found immeasurable benefits of allyship from heterosexual and cisgender counselor educators. Future researchers may wish to explore the benefits and need for allies in counselor education. While the current study focused on current LGBTQ+ competent counselor educators, future research may study counselor educators who identify as allies and examine the importance of being an LGBTQ+ ally within counselor education.

*Techniques* is the final category of the current study. Future quantitative research may explore the effectiveness of LGBTQ+ competent techniques based on CITs' results analyzed by a LGBTQ+ competent measure. For example, counselor educators could provide a measure at the beginning of a class, implement various recommended LGBTQ+ competent techniques in the study, and provide the same measure at the end of the class. Simultaneously, the same class without using LGBTQ+ competent techniques could be facilitated with the same pre and post measure. Similarly, qualitative research may explore CITs' receptiveness of LGBTQ+ competent techniques for an understanding of CITs' processes and experiences of LGBTQ+ competent techniques. Future research such as this may determine CITs' process of LGBTQ+ competence.

Furthermore, future studies could address LGBTQ+ clients' experiences of receiving LGBTQ+ competent counseling. For example, there is a dearth of research exploring transgender clients receiving transgender competent counseling. Both qualitative and quantitative research could be used to determine the success of LGBTQ+ clients receiving LGBTQ+ competent counseling services. Future research may benefit the counseling profession by exploring LGBTQ+ competence from the lens of counselor educators, CITs, and clients from a queer theoretical perspective to provide voice to various perspectives.

## **Conclusion**

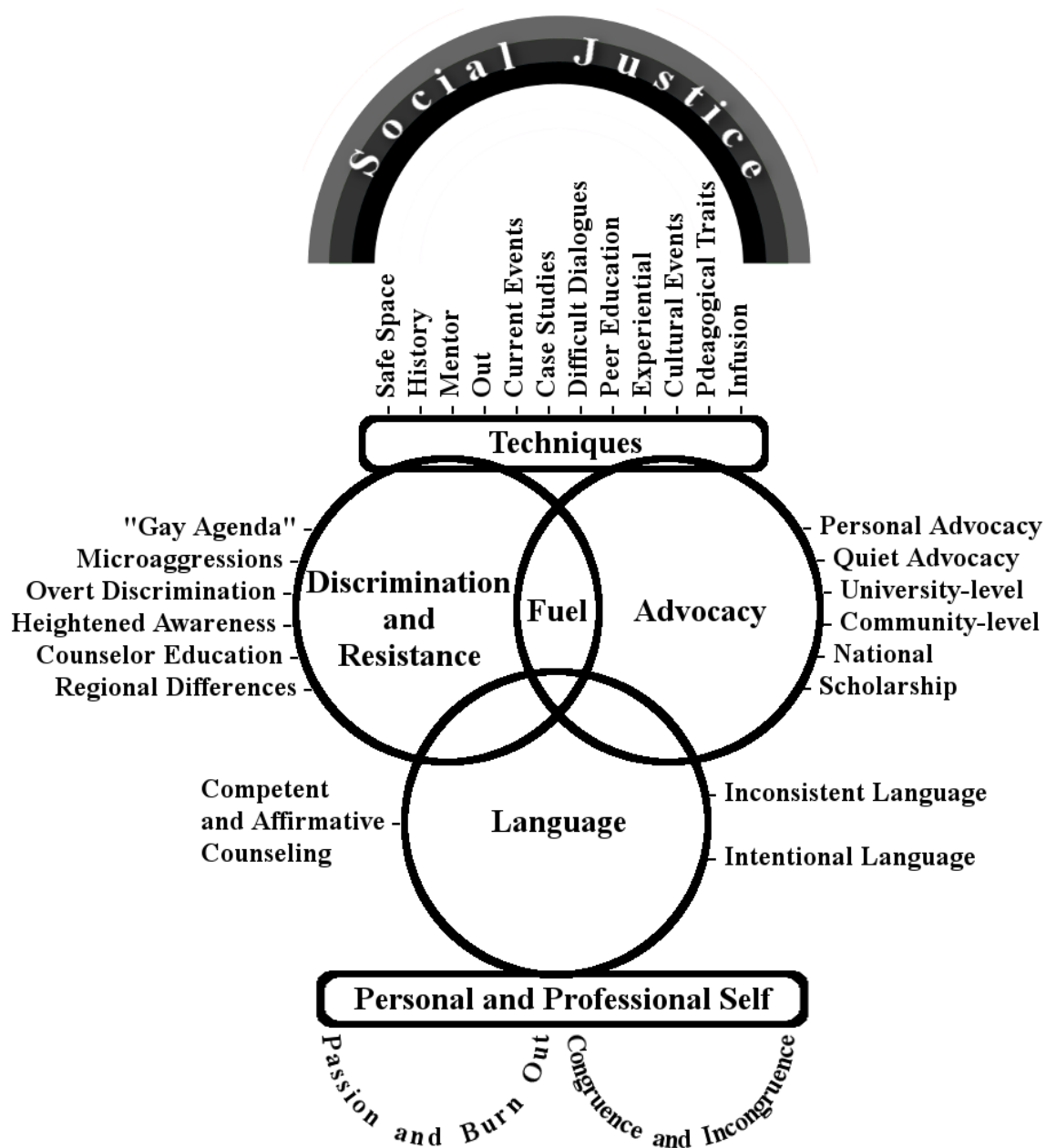
LGBTQ+ individuals and communities endure oppression and discrimination. Currently, counselors are not providing the services for LGBTQ+ individuals needed to decrease heteronormativity, transphobia, and other social injustices due to the lack of competence being taught within counselor education (Israel & Hackett, 2004; Logan &

Barret, 2005). The present study challenged the existing landscape and provides a comprehensive, detailed understanding of LGBTQ+ competent faculty processes of infusing LGBTQ+ competence throughout counselor education, resulting in a *LGBTQ+ Competent Project Map* framework as a guideline. Seven LGBTQ+ competent counselor educators across the nation shared their process of infusing LGBTQ+ competence in the counselor education profession. Using a queer theoretical philosophy, the co-constructed results of the investigation provide a detailed understanding of LGBTQ+ competent faculty. The emergent *LGBTQ+ Competent Project Map* (figure 6.10) was co-constructed by continued collaboration between the researcher and participants. The map explores the process of LGBTQ+ competent counselor educators becoming competent as well as infusing LGBTQ+ competence throughout counselor education.

LGBTQ+ counselor educators continue to experience discrimination and resistance within heteronormative and transphobic environments within counselor education. Counselor educators have the ability to dismantle the oppressive systems through LGBTQ+ competence, which may have an impact on society at large. Heterosexual and cisgender counselor educators are in positions of power that allow for disrupting heteronormativity and transphobia and thus are an important population to be LGBTQ+ competent. The emergent *LGBTQ+ Competent Project Map* stimulates further understanding of infusing LGBTQ+ competence throughout counselor education. Counselor educators can increase LGBTQ+ competence by using the maps as a guide, and ultimately enhancing LGBTQ+ competent services for LGBTQ+ clients. Infusing LGBTQ+ competence throughout counselor education begins the process of dismantling systemic oppression and discrimination, leading to opportunities for social justice.



Figure 6.10. LGBTQ+ Competent Project Map



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## Appendix A

**Idaho State University  
Informed Consent II Form**

As a participant in Jennifer Gess' dissertation, *Queering Counselor Education: Situational Analysis of LGBTQ+ Competent Faculty*, I am aware of the level of confidentiality utilized in protecting my identity. I am comfortable with the steps taken to ensure confidentiality.

BY SIGNING BELOW, I ACKNOWLEDGE THAT I HAVE READ AND CONSENT TO THE ABOVE.

---

*Signature*

---

*Date*

## Appendix B

## Situational Questionnaire

1. Region of current employment: \_\_\_\_\_
2. University affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Gender identity: \_\_\_\_\_
4. Age: \_\_\_\_\_
5. Affectional/sexual orientation: \_\_\_\_\_
6. Religious affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_
7. Race: \_\_\_\_\_
8. Ethnicity: \_\_\_\_\_
9. Socio-economic status: \_\_\_\_\_
10. Approximate length of time in profession? \_\_\_\_\_ years \_\_\_\_\_ months
11. Please briefly describe your unique situation as it relates to identifying as a LGBTQ+ competent counselor educator:

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