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An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis of Pre-Tenured, Tenure-Track Counselor Educators
Teaching the Master's-Level Research and Program Evaluation Class

by

Daisy Zhaoxuan Zhou

A dissertation
submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in the Department of Counseling
Idaho State University
Summer 2023

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RE: Study Number IRB-FY2023-61: An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis of New Faculty Teaching the Master's-Level Research and Program Evaluation Class

Dear Ms. Zhou:

Thank you for your responses to a previous review of the study listed above. I agree that this study qualifies as exempt from review under the following guideline: Category 2.(i). Research that only includes interactions involving educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior (including visual or auditory recording).

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Sincerely,

Ralph Baergen, PhD, MPH, CIP
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DEDICATION

To truth.

「朝闻道，夕死可矣。」



My research topic at the moment



To my community.

「海内存知己，天涯若比邻。」

TWO TYPES OF PEOPLE WHEN I
EXPLAIN MY RESEARCH



WHEN YOU'RE TELLING YOUR
FRIENDS ABOUT YOUR RESEARCH
and they have no idea what you're
talking about but they're supportive

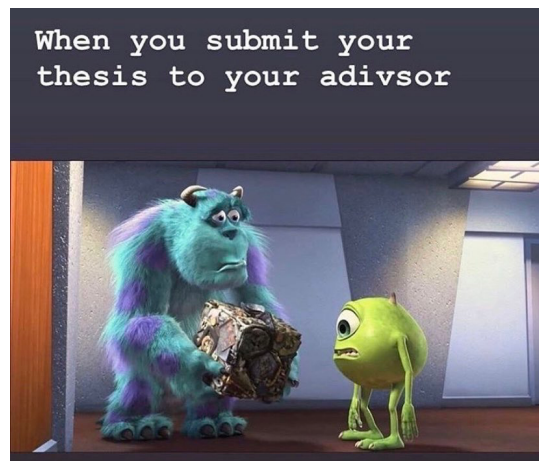


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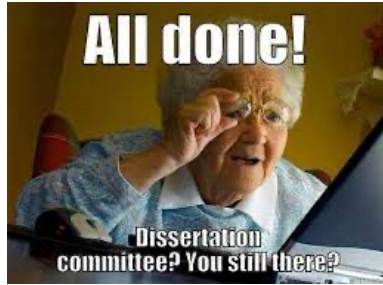
This may sound dramatic, but I started considering what to write in this Acknowledgment section before applying for doctoral programs. Finally, I am here!



To Dr. Steve Moody: Thank you for being my advisor. It has been such an adventure! You have always been my role model as a counselor, a mentor, an advisor, an instructor, a supervisor, a researcher, a leader, and a human being. The wand motivated me through my last chapter. It will continue to nurture my sincerity and self-awareness and support my high aims and ideals.



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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACA	American Counseling Association
ACES	Association for Counselor Education and Supervision
CACREP	Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs
CIT	Counselors-in-training
IPA	Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis of Pre-Tenured, Tenure-Track Counselor
Educators Teaching the Master's-Level Research and Program Evaluation Class
Dissertation Abstract – Idaho State University (2023)

Scholars repeatedly addressed the importance and challenges of providing practical research training for master's-level CITs (Jorgensen & Umstead, 2020). However, most articles on counseling research education highlight the training for doctoral students, and most articles on pedagogical practice left out the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) core area of research and program evaluation (Minton et al., 2018). Counseling students and practitioners reported a lack of readiness and interest in research and program evaluation (Steele & Rawls, 2015), showing the underutilization of research in their practice. To further understand the difficult moments in a research methods classroom, I conducted an Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) to explore how pre-tenured, tenure-track counselor educators experienced teaching the master's-level research course. I conducted two rounds of semi-structured interviews and identified themes through data analysis. The themes demonstrate the essential components of the participants' teaching experiences, including observing and experiencing emotions, navigating content knowledge, choosing teaching strategies, reflecting on their purposes of teaching, and navigating the teacher-learner relationship. IPA allowed me to explore how contextual factors, such as program structures and the sociocultural environment, impacted their teaching experiences. Recommendations for counselor educators, counseling programs, and the counseling profession are discussed.

Key Words: Master's-level research course, research education, counseling, counselor education, teaching strategies

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Leaders in the counseling field have highlighted the importance of research in practice (Huber & Savage, 2009; Kaplan & Gladding, 2011). The American Counseling Association (ACA) encourages counselors to “contribute to the knowledge base of the profession and promote a clearer understanding of the conditions that lead to a healthy and more just society” through conducting research (ACA, 2014, p. 15). According to the ACA Code of Ethics, counselors are responsible for engaging in research-informed counseling practices and continually monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of their clinical interventions (ACA, 2014). Meanwhile, third-party payers such as health insurance companies often expect mental health service providers, including counselors, to provide evidence of effectiveness in their clinical work, creating an increased need for counselors to integrate research as part of their professional life (Neilson, 2015; Sexton, 2000; Sexton & Whiston, 1996). Kaplan and Gladding (2011) recognized seven consensus issues for advancing the future of counseling, one of which was expanding and promoting the research base of professional counseling. They suggested that the counseling profession should encourage interest in research by practitioners and students (Kaplan & Gladding, 2011).

Correspondingly, the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) recognizes the necessity of research training as a critical component of counselor education and preparation. According to the 2016 CACREP Standards, counselor educators should infuse current counseling-related research into the curriculum. Evidence-based counseling practices were highlighted in the doctoral professional identity and entry-level counseling curriculum sections. CACREP has also identified research and program evaluation as one of the eight common core areas in the master’s-level counseling curriculum, requiring entry-

level counselor education graduates to develop the skills of critiquing research to inform counseling practice and gain foundational knowledge in qualitative, quantitative, and mixed research methods (CACREP, 2015). More specifically, the instructor of the research and program evaluation core class is supposed to cover needs assessments, development of outcome measures, program evaluation, designs used in research, statistical methods, analysis and use of data in counseling, and ethical and culturally relevant strategies for conducting, interpreting, and reporting the results of research and program evaluation (CACREP, 2015).

The discussion on potential inadequacies in research methods education for counselors-in-training (CITs) has lasted for decades and gained limited movement (Umstead, 2019). With a focus on pedagogical foundations and evidence-based counselor education practices, Jorgensen and Umstead (2020) suggested that leaders in the counseling field should elevate research training for CITs by developing a signature pedagogy in master's research education. Additionally, Balkin (2020) addressed the challenges of counseling research and advised counselor education programs to strengthen client-centered outcome research with analytic tools that support the demonstration of effective interventions and initiate outreach to community organizations that can benefit from assessment and evaluation services. Further, as stated in the article, "the development of a signature research pedagogy should extend beyond what is taught and also include how research should be taught to counselors." (Balkin, 2020, p. 51)

Existing literature highlights the significance of providing quality research training for CITs and explores the recommendations for counselor education programs and instructors of the research class (Huber & Savage, 2009; Jorgensen & Umstead, 2020; Kaplan & Gladding, 2011; Umstead, 2019; Remer, 1981; Woolsey, 1986). However, few studies examined how these counselor educators have utilized the suggested strategies in their teaching practice. This gap in

the literature fails to investigate the most incredible difficulties of teaching the master's-level research class from the instructors' perspective. To develop a signature pedagogy and provide valuable guidance in providing research training for CITs in counseling, counselor educators and scholars must better understand the instructors' lived experiences. Research exploring these research educators' insights is needed to identify effective teaching methods and curricula. With this goal in mind, I aim to understand and explore the experiences of counselor educators who have taught the master's-level research class as a core faculty in a CACREP-accredited program.

Conceptual Framework

The ACA Code of Ethics states that counselors should familiarize themselves with the current scientific and professional information about their scope of practice and continuously expand their knowledge and skills in working with diverse populations by remaining informed regarding best practices (ACA, 2014). Thus, CITs should acknowledge the importance of research in advancing the counseling profession and develop critical-thinking skills in reading research articles to inform their counseling practice (CACREP, 2016). To achieve the overarching goal of preparing CITs to become consumers of research and provide evidence-based counseling services, CACREP requires each counseling program to document how they cover research training in the curriculum (CACREP, 2016).

Instructors of research methods courses in counseling programs and other social sciences disciplines often face challenges in their teaching practice. Common challenges include students' anxious feelings about math and statistics (Davis, 2019; Briggs et al., 2009), difficulties in finding a suitable textbook that demonstrates relevance to the specific discipline and fits the students' development level (Jorgensen & Umstead, 2020), the dearth of discussions on pedagogical methods in research classes (Kilburn et al., 2014; Wagner et al., 2011), and the lack

of association of research with the students' developed professional identities (Balkin, 2020). To understand how educators teach and how students learn research methods, scholars have investigated students' learning experiences and provided teaching strategies and methods (Earley, 2014; Jorgensen & Umstead, 2020). The following section reviews the findings of the existing literature on research training and research methods education and draws attention to their relation to this study.

Research Methods Education in Social Sciences

With the increasing emphasis on training students to conduct research in social sciences, educators recognized the need for expert teachers of research methods and actively explored practical research methods training. As presented in a variety of peer-reviewed journal articles (e.g., Earley, 2014; Kilburn et al., 2014, Nind & Lewthwaite, 2018a; Wagner et al., 2011), educators in the social science field recognize the importance and difficulties in teaching research methods since it requires an integration of theoretical knowledge, practical experiences, and mastery of a range of classroom management skills.

Wagner et al. (2011) discussed the importance of teaching research methods in social science disciplines by analyzing 195 articles published in 61 academic journals between 1997 and 2007. They identified seven common themes in the existing literature, including general issues in research methods education, specific teaching strategies, research training in certain disciplines, teaching ethics in research, and teaching quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-method research (Wagner et al., 2011). They also identified a dearth of interdisciplinary and inter-institutional connectedness regarding research methods pedagogy (Wagner et al., 2011). They went on to suggest that scholars and educators should provide substantial theoretical and empirical treatment on three themes (1) the role and desirable characteristics of a research

methods teacher, (2) the challenges of teaching and learning specific aspects of research methods, and (3) commonalities and differences in research methods between disciplines (Wagner et al., 2011). The authors further advocated for a pedagogical culture, “the exchange of ideas within a climate of systematic debate, investigation, and evaluation surrounding all aspects of teaching and learning in the subject.” (Wagner et al., 2011, p. 75).

Similarly, Earley (2014) reviewed 89 studies on teaching introductory research methodology courses and acknowledged that instructors had to rely on support from their colleagues, insufficient research literature, and much trial-and-error as they navigate and improve their pedagogical practice in the research methods courses. They reported that most published articles anecdotally presented introductory research methods students as anxious and nervous about the course, being unmotivated to learn the materials, failing to see the relevance of the research course to their majors, and coming to the class with poor attitudes and misconceptions about research (Earley, 2014). Based on their analysis, practical teaching techniques that increase relevance, interest, and attitude include active learning, problem-based learning, cooperative learning, service learning, and general experiential learning (Earley, 2014). They also found a lack of empirical articles on what and how students learn in research methods courses, arguing for more investigations on student learning outcomes, such as changes in their knowledge, skills, and attitudes toward research, to demonstrate the effectiveness of particular instructional strategies (Earley, 2014).

Kilburn et al. (2014) contributed to filling the empirical research gap by highlighting three complementary and inter-related pedagogical goals, including (1) making the research process visible by actively engaging students in the aspects of the methods at hand, (2) facilitating learning through the experience of conducting research, and (3) encouraging critical

reflection on research practice. Further, Nind and Lewthwaite (2018a) applied the lens of inclusive pedagogy to research methods education. Acknowledging that research methods educators commonly perceive learners as ill-prepared and fearful of encountering math problems and conducting statistical analysis and may blame learners for being hard to teach, the authors advocated for a more holistic approach to teaching research methods and a more asset-based discourse (Nind & Lewthwaite, 2018a). By interviewing a group of research methods instructors, they also found that these educators were more likely to develop genuine responses to students' anxiety when traditional deficit-based solutions of the remedial class were removed (Nind & Lewthwaite, 2018a). They suggested that inclusive pedagogical practices would emerge when educators orient towards their students with student-centered practices (Nind & Lewthwaite, 2018a). Correspondingly, Howard and Brady (2015) introduced a constructivist pedagogy in research methods education, the critical component of which is to explore students' pre-existing perceptions of research methods and encourage students' autonomy to choose methodological approaches that fit their stance on knowledge. More recently, Nind et al. (2020) investigated students' experiences and perspectives on social sciences research methods education. They emphasized the social, emotional, active, and reflective nature of learning research methods and urged educators to attend to students' reactions (Nind et al., 2020). These arguments demonstrate the progress scholars have made in exploring the pedagogical culture of research methods education. With increased knowledge of teaching research methods, educators began to recognize the importance of accepting students' emotional responses and supporting their autonomy.

Researchers have also reported strong commonalities regarding the roots of pedagogic practice. In order to examine teaching and learning practices in advanced social research

methods, Lewthwaite and Nind (2016) employed a dialogic expert panel method to interview a group of international experts in research methods education among different social science disciplines. Participants identified various factors that impacted their instructional approach evolution, including their substantive discipline and professional identity, prior experiences of receiving research methods training, cultural and national context, and personal values (Lewthwaite & Nind, 2016). These findings highlighted the pedagogical development of educators as a long-term process where self-reflexivity plays a significant role. Meanwhile, scholars acknowledged the complex interconnections between conducting research studies and providing research education. They underscored that teaching and conducting research projects could significantly reinforce each other (Hsiung, 2016).

The findings of these abovementioned studies can be helpful to counselor educators. One of the most perceptible themes of journal articles on teaching research methods in social sciences is the sparse nature of the pedagogic culture (Nind & Lewthwaite, 2018b). A similar lack of attention to pedagogic approaches in research education also exists in counselor education. Further, self-reflection is essential in the professional identity development of research methods educators, including counselor educators (Conway, 2006). Moreover, counselors and counselor educators have the clinical skills to validate feelings, create a safe environment, and establish trusting relationships. These skills also effectively facilitate students' learning in a research methods class (Davis, 2019).

Research Training in Counselor Education

Aligning with the call for increased research capacity in social sciences, leaders in the counseling profession have underscored research training in graduate programs (Kaplan & Gladding, 2011). The 2016 CACREP Standard identifies “research and scholarship” as one of

the five doctoral core areas (CACREP, 2015), and existing literature in counseling and counselor education has explored doctoral students' research learning experiences (Borders et al., 2014; Okech et al., 2006). Topics include training experiences, research mentorship, research self-efficacy, publication and editorial feedback experiences, researcher identity development, self-perceived research proficiency, and scholarly productivity (e.g., Briggs & Pehrsson, 2008; Borders et al., 2014; Lambie & Vaccaro, 2011; Lee, 2019; Okech et al., 2006; Wang et al., 2022; Wester et al., 2019; Wester et al., 2020).

In the 1980s, compared to counseling psychology doctoral programs, counselor education doctoral programs included more hours of general research design courses, assigned greater importance to qualitative research methods, and were more likely to require the presentation or submission of research at professional conferences (Galassi et al., 1987). Higher research productive programs also put a heavier emphasis on the philosophy of science and provided more support for students' research activities and encouragement for research apprenticeship and collaboration between students and faculty members (Galassi et al., 1987). Leaders in the counseling field argued for more substantial support for informal research training, such as encouragement, funding opportunities, and mentorship to positively impact students' attitudes toward conducting research (Galassi et al., 1987).

In the 1990s, appreciating the variety of research agendas to be pursued in counselor education, research experts also expressed concerns about the lack of depth of research investigations and the frequency of experimental design and statistical errors in submitted articles (Fong & Malone, 1994). Thus, leaders began to advocate for enhancing research training in counseling and counselor education. O'Brien (1995) summarized four factors that had a consistent positive correlation with the effectiveness of research training, including (1) student

and training environment congruence, (2) practical research training, (3) early and active involvement in research, and (4) faculty involvement in research and mentoring. They also recommended the inter-university collaborative research team as a valuable training method.

Correspondingly, as researchers began to explore students' research training experiences and perspectives in counselor education doctoral programs, they found that CACREP-accredited doctoral programs had different requirements and attitudes regarding research training (Okech et al., 2006). The significant influences of research mentorship repeatedly emerged in multiple studies (Astramovich et al., 2004; Okech et al., 2006). Furthermore, participants also shared a lack of exposure to qualitative research methods in doctoral programs (Astramovich et al., 2004). They expressed a desire for more training in research methods, especially more qualitative courses, because this methodology was more congruent with their worldviews and could create a connection between the research world and their professional identities (Astramovich et al., 2004; Lambie & Vacc, 2011; Reisetter et al., 2004).

More recently, articles on specific aspects of doctoral students' research training emerged. Lambie and Vacc (2011) studied research constructs within counselor educators-in-training and found that higher research self-efficacy was associated with a higher interest in scholarly activities and publication experiences. Incongruent with some prior research findings, the results of their study suggested that third-year students had higher levels of research self-efficacy than first- and second-year students (Lambie & Vacc, 2011). Lamar and Helm (2017) conducted a phenomenological study on the researcher identity development of counselor education doctoral students, and they revealed five themes portraying the participants' experiences, including (1) developing confidence, (2) internalizing the researcher identity, (3) developing a researcher voice, (4) "juggling" and "meshing" the researcher identity with other

identities, and (5) journeying as a researcher. These findings indicate that the researcher identity development is an enduring process that includes multiple layers and aspects. They also identified learning opportunities and institutional support as contributing factors to the participants' researcher identity development (Lamar & Helm, 2017). Additionally, multiple participants shared the pressure of faking confidence and expressed a persistent concern about how they would continue to juggle different professional identities (counselor, supervisor, instructor, researcher, and other identities) as they moved into academic positions after graduation (Lamar & Helm, 2017).

When transitioning from doctoral student roles to full-time faculty roles, beginning counselor educators continue to build up their knowledge and skills in conducting research. Scholars have explored the professional development issues for pre-tenured faculty (Conway, 2006; Magnuson et al., 2003; Wester et al., 2019). Similar to articles on research learning experiences of doctoral students, the existing literature includes investigations on new faculty's research productivity, perceived supportive environment, research mentorship, and the connection between research experience and imposter phenomenon (e.g., Stickl Haugen et al., 2021; Wester et al., 2019; Wester et al., 2020).

On the other hand, as indicated in the name "counselor education," teaching preparation is another core area of doctoral-level training (CACREP, 2015). Most counselor education doctoral programs include a teaching preparation component, such as teaching practicum, co-teaching, guest lecturing, and supervision of teaching within a mentoring relationship (Baltrinic et al., 2016). Observation and feedback from faculty, attending seminars on college teaching, and structured and consistent supervision for teaching also contribute to doctoral students' perceptions of overall teaching preparedness and teaching self-efficacy (Baltrinic & Suddeath,

2020; Hall & Hulse, 2010; Suddeath et al., 2020). The Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES) Teaching Initiative Taskforce has provided Best Practices in Teaching in Counselor Education as a guideline for counselor educators (ACES, 2016). Sangganjanavanich and Black (2011) suggested a new paradigm of teaching the research and program evaluation class by integrating constructivist perspectives. Patka et al. (2017) introduced the utilization of photovoice as an experiential learning tool to encourage students' engagement in a research class. These arguments have drawn a parallel with the calling for student-centered pedagogical practices in research methods education in social sciences (Howard & Brady, 2015; Nind & Lewthwaite, 2018a). Later, Swank and Houseknecht (2020) conducted a Delphi study that identified knowledge, skills, professional behaviors, and dispositions as four domains of necessary teaching competencies. However, few articles addressed counselor education doctoral students' preferences and interests in teaching specific classes. Meanwhile, doctoral students often express unreadiness and unwillingness to teach or co-teach the master's-level research class.

Despite the comprehensive teaching preparation for doctoral students in counselor education, their attitudes toward the research and program evaluation course remain unexplored. Likewise, counselor educators also experience under-preparedness in providing research training (Borders et al., 2014). Researchers investigated counselor education faculty satisfaction with research training for doctoral students, and participants reported different experiences of working with non-counseling faculty who taught the research class (Borders et al., 2014). Among the 38 participants, seven reported collegial relationships with faculty in other disciplines, and two described the working relationship as negative (Borders et al., 2014). When a counselor educator works with a non-counseling instructor on a research class, the non-counseling instructor likely

teaches quantitative, qualitative, sampling, and measurement topics, while the counselor educator often teaches ethical considerations and research process components (Borders et al., 2014). Some participants expressed a wish that non-counseling faculty would make course content more relevant to counseling students, “while it would be great to see more research courses taught by counselor educators, the reality is that there are few in the field who have the training needed to teach these courses well.” (Borders et al., 2014, p. 154). Counselor educators may have different expectations of research training in our profession. Newer faculty often more actively point out the areas of growth in research education, with older ones believing that our current research training covers much more than what they learned in graduate school (Borders et al., 2014). This discrepancy indicates older counselor educators’ hesitancy in teaching the research and program evaluation class, and newer faculty are more likely to accept this task. Furthermore, teaching experts in counselor education reviewed hundreds of articles on pedagogical practice published from 2000 to 2015 and revealed a consistent lack of attention to research and program evaluation (Minton et al., 2014; Minton et al., 2018). This lack of pedagogical culture is consistent with the pattern in other social science disciplines (Earley, 2014; Nind & Lewthwaite, 2018b; Wagner et al., 2011).

The existing literature has addressed concerns regarding beginning counselor educators’ unreadiness for their teaching responsibilities and the pressure on scholarly productivity (e.g., Borders et al., 2019). Researchers have provided suggestions for individuals and departments, such as starting teaching and guest speaking activities early as doctoral students, ongoing mentorship for teaching practice and scholarly activities, and fostering a collaborative department culture (Borders et al., 2019; Waalkes et al., 2018; Waalkes et al., 2021; Waalkes et al., 2022). Given the mutual reinforcement between conducting research studies and providing

research education, teaching the master's-level research class can be a dilemma and a unique learning opportunity for a new counselor educator to grow as an instructor and a researcher. Counselor educators acknowledge their under-preparedness for providing systemic research training (Borders et al., 2014) for students, leading one to question the effectiveness of research education for master's-level CITs and students' perceptions of their learning experience. The following section includes a summary of findings on research training for master's-level counseling students.

Research Training for Master's-Level CITs

The lack of passion among practicing counselors and CITs for conducting research projects has been an ongoing concern in the counseling and counselor education literature (e.g., Granello & Granello, 1998; Gerig, 2012; Heppner & Anderson, 1985; Huber & Savage, 2009; Remer, 1981; Wang & Guo, 2011). Loesch and Vacc (1988) reported that performance ratings on the Research and Evaluation subsection of the National Counselor Examination were among the lowest scores for individuals completing this exam, indicating the inadequacy of knowledge related to research methods among CITs.

More recently, multiple empirical articles revealed that the current research training for master's-level counseling students was not well received (e.g., Steele & Rawls, 2015; Umstead, 2019). In a quantitative study on master's-level counseling students' perceived degree of preparedness across the CACREP Research and Program Evaluation standard objectives and their attitudes toward quantitative research, participants moderately agreed that their research training prepared them to understand the objectives identified in the CACREP standard (Steele & Rawls, 2015). They also reported low self-efficacy and perceived knowledge related to quantitative research, with no statistical differences across program accreditation or specialty

area (Steele & Rawls, 2015).

In addition to master's-level CITs' perceptions of the research and program evaluation course, Jorgensen and Duncan (2015a, 2015b) explored a broader and more complex concept, the researcher identity development, among master's-level CITs. They conceptualized the researcher identity as an outcome of students' deep understanding of their counselor identities, asserting that faculty mentorship, beliefs about research, and other internal and external factors could enhance students' researcher identity development (Jorgensen & Duncan, 2015a). In a phenomenological investigation, Jorgensen and Duncan (2015b) identified three stages of master's-level CITs' researcher identity development, including (1) stagnation, where CITs experience confusion, dislike, and avoidance of research and loyalty to their practitioner identity, (2) negotiation, where CITs gain more confidence, realize a need to take the initiative, and receive mentorship from others, and (3) stabilization, where CITs accept fluid conceptualizations of research and professional identity and participate in research activities.

To conduct a more detailed evaluation of educators' pedagogical practice in research training, Umstead (2018) analyzed syllabi of the master's-level research and program evaluation course in CACREP-accredited programs and identified the most common assignments as article critiques, quizzes and exams, and research projects. They asserted that many master's-level CITs seemed not to receive research education that built a connection between research methods learning to clinical practice nor trained them to utilize research in their clinical work with clients and students (Umstead, 2019). Acknowledging that master's-level CITs experience variability and possibly inadequacy in the quality of their research training, Umstead (2019) conducted a consensual qualitative research study to explore practitioners' use of research in practice. They found that counseling programs had inconsistently translated research to practice and that some

master's-level counselors reported experiencing a lack of hands-on research training, ineffective modality (e.g., online), and minimal messages around incorporating research into practice (Umstead, 2019). Relatedly, Davis (2019) investigated students' fears surrounding the academic requirements of a research methods course and found that compared to students in the traditional classroom setting, those in the web-hybrid course reported higher levels of fear.

Most articles on research training in counseling programs incorporate recommendations for counselor educators and counseling programs. These recommendations often include acknowledging and normalizing students' fear and anxiety (Davis, 2019), employing experiential learning activities (Rehfuss & Meyer, 2012), integrating research throughout the entirety of the program (Granello & Granello, 1998; Letourneau, 2015; Sexton, 2000; Steele & Rawls, 2015), introducing qualitative research methods (Letourneau, 2015), emphasizing the use of action research during practicum and internship (Steele & Rawls, 2015), creating a facilitative research training environment in the department (Gelso, 1993), providing master's-level CITs with research mentorship (Jorgensen & Duncan, 2015a, 2015b), and inviting master's-level CITs to assist in faculty research (Lambie & Vaccaro, 2011). However, with similar suggestions repeatedly appearing in published articles, our profession made limited progress in research training for master's-level CITs during the past decades (Umstead, 2019). As Balkin (2020) stated, "if counselor educators are going to be effective champions for course development separate and distinct from the current research courses taught across graduate programs in education, advocacy alone is insufficient." (p. 51)

Research methods education has been an enduring challenge for social science disciplines (Adriaensen et al., 2015; Earley, 2014; Wagner et al., 2011). A similar lack of pedagogical culture regarding research education exists in counselor education (Minton et al., 2014; Minton

et al., 2018). Although scholars have repeatedly advocated for experiential learning strategies and constructivist approaches in teaching the research and program evaluation class (Patka et al., 2017; Sangganjanavanich & Black, 2011), students continuously report negative attitudes and low self-efficacy regarding using research to inform their counseling practice (Heppner et al., 1999; Steele & Rawls, 2015; Umstead, 2019). The existing literature has revealed a lack of interest in providing research training among counselor educators, especially the more experienced counseling faculty (Border et al., 2014), leading to challenges in students' learning experiences and outcomes and possibly leaving teaching the master's-level research class as a task for beginning counselor educators.

Reflexivity Statement

Aligning with the core principles of qualitative research, I aim to gain insights into my identities, positionalities, beliefs, biases, and assumptions that may impact the research process (Berger, 2015; Engward & Goldspink, 2020; Goldspink & Engward, 2019). As the primary investigator of this study, I keep in mind a commitment to critically inquire and engage in intrapersonal and interpersonal reflection before interacting with the participants and during the data analysis stage (Hale et al., 2007; Newton et al., 2012). I hope to reveal myself authentically to minimize the impact of my presence and engagement on the research participants and the research process, eventually prioritizing the participants' insights, experiences, and voices.

I spent the last ten years as a full-time student at different universities. As an undergraduate student, I attended a top research university in my home country, China, where many faculty were productive researchers but were not passionate about teaching, mentoring, or advising. During my time in the School of Psychology and Cognitive Science, the program of study for undergraduate students included two classes in statistics and at least three classes in

experiment design. I experienced a lot of helplessness and hopelessness in most of these research and statistics classes, suffered from hearing professors' demeaning comments on qualitative methodology and qualitative researchers, and felt traumatized and isolated in my research training experiences. As a result, this experience contributed to my misunderstandings of research and researchers.

After that, I spent four years in a CACREP-accredited program in a teaching institution and felt relieved that I was not required to conduct research or engage in academic writing. A licensed psychologist delivered the research and statistics course as an adjunct professor, and it was easy and boring for me. I understood all the concepts, got high scores on the quizzes, and failed to recognize the connection between research and counseling practice. I was also shocked that it took my master's program years to hire a full-time faculty interested in teaching the research class. However, I felt thrilled and touched when sitting in the new version of the research and program evaluation class. Research became more approachable and beautiful in my life.

When I was a master's-level counselor intern in a community counseling center, our team read a peer-reviewed journal article each week as part of the group supervision. The team usually enjoyed reading conceptual articles and having meaningful conversations. However, I also observed that the staff counselors at my site, who earned their degrees from CACREP-accredited programs, usually skipped the method and the result sections when reading research articles, demonstrating limited knowledge and skills in critical thinking when consuming research.

Reflecting on my training experiences and observation, I firmly believe that we, as counselor educators, could do better and should do better in providing master's-level research training. Then I began to wonder, how do we do better? Throughout my doctoral study journey, I

served as a teaching assistant for the research class and actively communicated with faculty members about their insights. Through these learning experiences, I became aware of potential challenges in providing research training. By immersing myself in the existing literature, I developed an increased interest in studying the experiences and perspectives of research methods educators in counselor education.

To orient myself within this study, I employ a social constructivist paradigm. Ontologically, I believe in multiple realities that are subjective to different individuals and relative to their engagement in an experience (Cottone, 2017). Epistemologically, I view the research process as an opportunity for the participants and the researcher to co-construct reality (Green, 2020). Moreover, a trusting relationship between the researcher and the participants enhances understanding of an in-depth inquiry and improves data analysis accuracy. Thus, I intend to use Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA, Smith et al., 2015) to investigate the meaning-making of counselor educators' experience of teaching the master's-level research and program evaluation class as a beginning faculty.

Rationale

The counseling field has underscored the significant impact of research training on evidence-based counseling practice (CACREP, 2015; Huber & Savage, 2009; Kaplan & Gladding, 2011). Researchers have continuously discussed the challenges and strategies in teaching master's-level research and program evaluation courses in the past several decades (e.g., Granello & Granello, 1998; Gerig, 2012; Heppner & Anderson, 1985; Huber & Savage, 2009; Jorgenson & Umstead, 2020; Remer, 1981; Wang & Guo, 2011). Students in counseling and other social science disciplines often come into the introduction to research class with high anxiety (Davis, 2019), misunderstandings of research, and a lack of motivation to engage in

learning (Earley, 2014; Wagner et al., 2011). Commonly suggested teaching strategies include active learning, problem-based learning, cooperative learning, service learning, and experiential learning (Earley, 2014; Rehfuss & Meyer, 2012). However, in the existing literature on pedagogical practice in the counseling profession, the research and program evaluation courses remain among the most neglected CACREP core areas (Minton et al., 2014; Minton et al., 2018). Likewise, research methods educators in other social science disciplines experience a similar struggle in navigating the research class (Adriaensen et al., 2015; Kilburn et al., 2014; Nind & Lewthwaite, 2018b; Wagner et al., 2011).

More importantly, master's-level CITs and practitioners continuously reported concerns and unpreparedness regarding the research training they received, leading to underutilization of research in their counseling practice (Steele & Rawls, 2015; Umstead, 2019). Faculty in counseling departments acknowledge the dearth of well-trained research educators in our profession and face the fact that many departments hire non-counseling professors to teach research and program evaluation courses (Borders et al., 2014). Some counseling faculty believe that courses taught outside the counseling program lack relevance for counseling students' interests (Borders et al., 2014). When a counseling department can offer an in-house research and program evaluation course, the instructor will likely be a beginning faculty who is exploring a challenging and unique stage of developing their researcher and instructor identities. However, their experiences in teaching this course remain unseen. Exploring beginning counselor educators' perspectives, experiences, and meaning-making may help us gain insights into the particular difficulties in providing research training for master's-level CITs, further promoting evidence-based counseling practice among clinicians. This study explores participants' lived experiences of teaching the research and program evaluation course in CACREP-accredited

programs as pre-tenured, tenure-track counselor educators.

Proposed Study

The existing literature in counselor education has discussed practical research training for doctoral students and repeatedly addressed issues and challenges in master's-level research training. Despite several research articles on master's-level students' perceptions of research training, there is currently little research that addresses instructors' experiences and perceptions of teaching the master's-level research and program evaluation course. Our profession needs a more thorough investigation of the instructors' experiences and perspectives in teaching this course. The purpose of this study is to explore the lived experiences of beginning counselor educators teaching the master's-level research class. Thus, this IPA research project aims to fill the gap and answer the following question:

How do pre-tenured, tenure-track counselor educators experience teaching the master's-level research and program evaluation course?

To explore the experiences of new counselor educators in teaching this course, I implemented the qualitative research design IPA inquiry. I chose this methodology to explore the experiences and meaning-making process of the participants. I recruited participants, analyzed each individual's personal experiences, and created themes to illustrate a more comprehensive understanding of how they make sense of their experiences in their professional development. Through this study, I hoped to expand our profession's knowledge of practical research training for master's-level CITs.

Summary

Despite the call for an increased capacity for research, the exploration of research methods education is limited in the body of literature on social sciences education (Earley, 2014;

Wagner et al., 2011). Similarly, within counselor education, most articles on research education highlight the training environment for doctoral students to facilitate their productivity and self-efficacy, and most articles on pedagogical practice left out the CACREP-core area of research and program evaluation (Minton et al., 2014; Minton et al., 2018). However, during the past few decades, scholars repeatedly addressed the importance and challenges of providing practical research training for master's-level CITs (Jorgensen & Umstead, 2020). Meanwhile, master's-level CITs and practitioners reported a lack of preparedness and interest in research and program evaluation (Steele & Rawls, 2015), indicating a considerable underutilization of research in their clinical work. Advocates in our profession asserted the need for a signature pedagogy in master's-level research training to promote evidence-based counseling practice (Jorgensen & Umstead, 2020). To further understand the difficult moments in a research methods classroom, the researcher will listen to and highlight the voices of instructors who had experience teaching the research class as a beginning faculty.

This investigation into participants' lived experiences can expand our understanding of the challenges and learning moments beginning counselor educators experienced in their pedagogical practice of teaching the research class. Through this exploration, we could gain insights into providing support for research methods educators and further enhance the research training for master's-level CITs. Active exploration of the pedagogical practice in research training may assist counselor educators in facilitating CITs' researcher identity, increasing practitioners' utilization of research, and, ultimately, prioritizing client care through evidence-based counseling services.

CHAPTER II: METHODOLOGY

The utilization of research and monitoring of the effectiveness of clinical interventions are critical elements of ethical counseling practice (ACA, 2014; CACREP, 2015). As the counseling profession realizes the importance of research and evidence-based counseling practice, more published articles have discussed research training in graduate programs (Umstead, 2019). As for preparing master's-level CITs for research and program evaluation and integrating these areas into the master's-level curriculum, previous scholars have found that many students came to the research course with high anxiety and commonly had low self-efficacy and perceived knowledge related to quantitative research after completing the research class (Davis, 2019; Steele & Rawls, 2015). Meanwhile, conceptual articles in teaching the master's-level research class in counselor education often include suggestions for counselor educators, while few scholars have explored how instructors have implemented these suggestions in their teaching practice. Moreover, recognizing the shortage of experienced research methods educators in the counseling profession, many graduate programs hire non-counseling faculty to teach the research courses (Borders et al., 2014). Among counselor educators, newer faculty often have more critical opinions on research training in counselor education than more seasoned faculty (Borders et al., 2014), and they are more likely to teach the in-house research and program evaluation course.

To better understand the challenges in providing research education in a master's-level counseling program, we need to explore the experiences of the instructors who directly work with CITs. Examining the beginning counselor educators' teaching and mentoring experience may provide insight into how departments and our profession can best support new educators. In turn, this may further facilitate CITs' researcher identity development and promote evidence-

based counseling practice among clinicians. I hoped to create a safe and open space for the participants to express their teaching experiences in the master's-level research course freely and for myself to participate in a relational, interpretative process to produce accurate, in-depth analysis. I also developed themes on the individual and group levels and simultaneously pay attention to similarities and differences among participants' responses.

I utilized a social constructivist paradigm as the primary investigator of this study. According to the social constructivist paradigm, interpretations and reflections assist us in constructing personal lived experiences into knowledge (Lincoln & Guba, 2013; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Furthermore, Creswell (2013) highlighted the importance of individuals' meaning-making in generating knowledge. Besides the present experience, cultural background and context influence individuals' meaning-making process (Creswell & Poth, 2018). To honor the participants' lived experiences, meaning-making process, and cultural backgrounds, researchers employing a social constructivist paradigm keep curiosity on their minds in recognizing and exploring the participants' lived contexts and constructing a pattern of meaning as they interact with participants (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

When considering the experience of teaching the master's-level research class among beginning counselor educators, I hoped to understand the layered and complex reactions to this unique and possibly challenging experience in their personal and professional journey. This experience may also impact their perceptions of their departments and professional identity development as instructors, researchers, and advocates. To fully understand the participants' experiences and meaning-making, I intended to pay close attention to each individual's unique journey. Through the lens of social constructivism, I explored the intrapersonal, interpersonal, organizational, and cultural impacts on each participant to investigate how they have created

meaning from their experiences teaching the master's-level research class as a beginning educator and new member of a faculty team. To do this, I have proposed the research question:

How do beginning counselor educators experience teaching the master's-level research and program evaluation course?

Rooted in the philosophy of social constructivism, phenomenological research methods regard human experiences as the core of the research process (Cronin & Lowes, 2016). I have chosen IPA for its close attention to the lived experiences and subjective perspectives of those who experience a given phenomenon (Miller et al., 2018). I hoped to understand each participant's distinctive teaching experience as a new faculty member in the master's-level research class. In this chapter, I summarize the philosophical foundations of IPA, methodological procedures, the role of the researcher and participants, and how I proposed to improve trustworthiness throughout the research process.

Qualitative Research

According to Creswell (2013), researchers should recognize the deep connection between one's research question and intentional decision-making in methodology. Qualitative research methods are suitable and effective in investigating specific phenomena. The researcher analyzes participants' narratives to understand their perspectives and how they construct meaning in their world (Patton, 2015). By interpreting the participants' lived experiences and narratives, qualitative researchers can better understand the nuances of a phenomenon and how each participant creates unique meaning from it, thus generating potential implications (Koch et al., 2013).

Qualitative research can explore phenomena beyond personal experience and meaning-making on the individual level and expand the exploration to the systemic level (Patton, 2015).

Regarding the classroom for teaching and learning as a system, using qualitative research to explore “why people do what they do within systems” and producing an “in-depth inquiry of system dynamics” may help us understand the beginning counselor educators’ instructional decision-making and teacher-learner interaction (Patton, 2015, p. 8). I aimed to provide insights into the teaching and learning process in the master’s-level research and program evaluation course of various CACREP-accredited programs. Given that qualitative research encompasses a wide range of ontologies and epistemologies that are quite different from conventional approaches to research, IPA is the best fit for my research question and ontological and epistemological approach.

Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

Phenomenology is a commonly employed qualitative methodology that emphasizes inductive logic, seeks the perspectives and subjective narratives and interpretations of participants, and is not so much concerned with generalizations to larger populations but with contextual description and analysis (Creswell, 2013). It has become the most widely used qualitative approach in counseling (Hays et al., 2016).

IPA is a contemporary qualitative research method grounded in phenomenology, hermeneutics, and idiography, aiming to make sense of the participants making sense of an experience (Miller et al., 2018; Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014; Smith et al., 2009). IPA is a tool for clarifying and elucidating a phenomenon with a specific focus on the participants’ meaning-making as embodied socio-historically situated beings (Eatough & Smith, 2017; Shinebourne, 2011). The primary interest of an IPA researcher is the individual participant’s experience of the phenomenon instead of the structure of the phenomenon itself. Hermeneutics involves interpretation and generating meaning (Noon, 2018). In IPA, the double hermeneutic happens

when “the participant is trying to make sense of their personal and social world; the researcher is trying to make sense of the participant trying to make sense of their personal and social world” (Smith, 2004, p. 40). The impact factors of this process include the participant’s ability to articulate their experiences and the researcher’s skills in creating a safe environment and facilitating a meaningful conversation.

Among a variety of phenomenological approaches and procedures, IPA highlights its commitment to idiography, an emphasis on individuality and a commitment to a thorough finely-textured analysis of contingent, distinctive, and often subjective phenomena (Noon, 2018). By scrutinizing the convergence and differences in perceptions and experiences among participants, IPA researchers attempt to consider each participant’s cultural background and context (Allan & Eatough, 2016; Smith, 2011). As the original developers of this method claimed, “IPA has the more modest ambition of attempting to capture particular experiences as experienced for particular people” (Smith et al., 2009, p. 16).

The selection of IPA aligned with this study’s purpose and underlying philosophical paradigm that understanding how individuals make sense of their experiences is an interpretative activity best accomplished through the detailed examination of particular cases (Larkin & Thompson, 2011). In IPA, the analysis is both descriptive and interpretive, allowing the participants to portray their lived experience of teaching the master-level research and program evaluation courses and share their insights and perspectives of this experience.

Ontology is concerned with the nature of reality and that of human beings (Lee, 2012), and IPA lies within the ontological paradigm of constructivism with the belief that reality is subjective and socially constructed through interaction with individuals (Larkin et al., 2006; Lincoln et al., 2018). Moreover, IPA researchers view the world as a construction from people’s

perspectives and standpoints (Cuthbertson et al., 2020) and always see their participants as “persons-in-context” (Larkin et al., 2006). Epistemology is a theory of knowledge that explores the ways of generating, acquiring, and conveying knowledge (Cuthbertson et al., 2020), and IPA researchers endorse a subjectivist epistemology where the researcher and the participant cocreate understandings (Smith & Fieldsend, 2021). Further, IPA researchers believe that the value of social constructivist research is in producing contextual knowledge of a defined topic (Cuthbertson et al., 2020). To this end, I was mindful of my role as a researcher in facilitating participants’ reflection and expression.

IPA researchers often focus on how everyday experiences shift and begin to take on a new meaning for individuals (Smith, 2004). Beginning counselor educators continue to grow as instructors, researchers, and leaders through pedagogical practice, scholarly activities, and advocacy (Waalkes et al., 2018; Wester et al., 2019). The teaching experience in the master’s-level research and program evaluation class may contribute uniquely to their development and professional journey. By exploring this lived experience of the participants, I sought to facilitate their meaning-making process and expand our understanding of practical methods of supporting new counselor educators in providing effective research training for master’s-level CITs.

Role of the Researcher

The researcher plays a very active and integral role in an IPA study. As the primary researcher, I was curious and deeply committed to hearing about the participants’ lived experiences and meaning-making processes (Alase, 2017; Larkin & Thompson, 2012; Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014). In exploring beginning counselor educators’ teaching experience in the research and program evaluation courses, I aimed to hold a safe space for the participants’ voices by providing a written informed consent document and highlighting confidentiality before

the interview, plus utilizing active listening skills to validate the participants' feelings and inner experiences during the interview. I also reminded myself of the participants' cultural backgrounds, previous interactions with research, and organizational factors.

Given my passion for providing quality research training for master's-level CITs and my desire to learn from the participants as colleagues, I carefully managed my personal biases. As an IPA researcher, I acknowledged that biases, preoccupations, and assumptions are inevitable in conducting the research. Therefore, I continued to practice self-reflection and actively engage with these biases and assumptions to understand the phenomenon more accurately. More importantly, as guided by Smith (2007), I took a curious stance and remained non-judgmental in realizing my prejudices since these prejudices can be limited and revised, leading to more valuable and creative interpretations. I also employed self-monitoring strategies, which I discuss in the trustworthiness section.

Role of the Participant

Participants in IPA agree to engage in a relational, interpretive conversation with the researcher. They share their experience of a phenomenon and their meaning-making process regarding the identified phenomenon. Participants reach a high level of reflexivity to provide a detailed description of their experience and meaning-making process (Biggerstaff & Thompson, 2008; Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014). I asked participants about their teaching experiences in the master's-level research and program evaluation courses and their insights into the impact of this experience on their professional development, adjustment to the new department, and personal growth. Meanwhile, aligning with IPA's emphasis on contextual factors (Smith & Osborn, 2004), participants had opportunities to reflect on the roles of their social identities and organizational factors in this process. Highlighting participants' voices is a foundational goal of

the IPA inquiry as they share their experiences and meaning-making.

Research Procedures

The phenomenon of interest in this study is the teaching experience of beginning counselor educators in the master's-level research and program evaluation course. The idiographic nature of IPA allows researchers and participants to deeply explore their unique perspectives and pay close attention to each person's distinctive experiences and meaning-making (Smith, 2011).

Given that saturation is not part of the typical IPA data collection and analysis process (Brocki & Wearden, 2006), Smith et al. (2009) recommend a small sample size of three to six participants for IPA researchers to engage in this in-depth exploration fully. However, as Noon (2018) discussed, researchers often face the conflict between the idiographic underpinning of IPA and the search for commonality across participants. Wagstaff et al. (2014) highlighted the limited opportunity to generate unique themes for individual participants unless conducting a single-case study. Nevertheless, Arroll (2015) argued that investigators should include themes from at least three participants in each theme for a sample size ranging from four to eight participants. Additionally, Clarke (2010) asserted that three is the default sample size for undergraduate or master's-level IPA study, while four to ten is recommended for doctoral candidates. Taking these suggestions into account, I recruited seven participants for my research project.

Selection of Participants

IPA researchers intend to generate a purposive and relatively homogeneous sample, ensuring the investigation holds relevance and personal significance to each participant and allowing the researcher to pay close attention to details on the group of individuals who have

experienced a particular phenomenon (Smith et al., 2009). Creswell (2013) also advised qualitative researchers to select participants that best support them in understanding the central phenomenon.

I was interested in counselor educators who have taught master's-level research and statistics classes. I focused on beginning faculty since they likely are assigned to teach the class. Eligibility criteria for this study included: (a) the participant must hold a doctoral degree from a CACREP-accredited program, (b) the participant must subjectively identify themselves as a counselor educator and have been working full-timely in a CACREP-accredited program after receiving their doctoral degree, (c) the participant taught/was teaching the master's-level research and program evaluation course as a pre-tenured (tenure-track position) counseling faculty, (d) the participant had been a full-time counselor educator for more than two years and has not been a full-time counselor educator for seven or more years, and (e) the participant must be willing to be interviewed and provide consent by completing and submitting the demographic questionnaire. These criteria ensure a reasonable level of homogeneity among the participants and create opportunities to examine the convergence and divergence in detail (Smith et al., 2009).

I utilized two strategies to recruit participants that best assisted me in understanding the central phenomenon. First, I sent a call for participants for this study (Appendix A) to the CESNet listserv, a well-known listserv to which many counselor educators subscribe and many other researchers send recruitment emails. I posted the same participant recruitment announcement on the community digests of national professional organizations, including ACA, the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision, and the Association for Assessment and Research in Counseling.

Recognizing the dearth of research educators in our profession, I sent invitation letters (Appendix B) to prospective participants via email (Alase, 2017) and applied the snowball sampling strategy because the participants with the target characteristics were not easily accessible (Naderifar et al., 2017). The prospective participants were counselor educators who had discussed research and program evaluation training for master's-level CITs and shared their perspectives at professional conferences. I believed their enthusiasm and insights would lead to rich and thick descriptions of their lived experiences.

Once I obtained IRB approval through Idaho State University Human Subjects Board, prospective participants received informed consent (Appendix C) and a brief demographic survey (Appendix D) through Qualtrics, an online survey software. Potential participants accessed these documents, as approved by the Idaho State University Human Subjects Board, through the recruitment announcement (Appendix A) or the invitation email (Appendix B). I then contacted the eligible participants via email to schedule a first-round interview and sent the ineligible ones a thank-you email. Once eligible participants signed the informed consent document and completed the demographics survey, the data collection procedures began.

Data Collection Procedures

Data collection included three stages. In the first stage, participants signed the Research Participant Informed Consent document (Appendix C) and completed the Participant Selection Screening Demographic Questionnaire (Appendix D) on the Qualtrics online platform. I provided the link to these two documents in my participant recruitment announcement (Appendix A) and research project invitation email (Appendix B). Once the interested participants agreed to the Research Participant Informed Consent and submitted the demographic questionnaire, I reviewed potential participants for appropriateness of fit and moved to the

second phase of data collection, the first-round interviews.

Alase (2017) discussed considerations of interview scheduling in IPA studies. Besides providing informed consent, researchers should be intentional about the time factor and conduct and conclude the participants' interviews within a reasonable time period (Alase, 2017; Flick, 2010). I followed up with the eligible participants via email within three days of their submission of the Research Participant Informed Consent and the Participant Selection Screening Demographic Questionnaire. In the follow-up email, I provided at least eight optional periods for scheduling the first-round interview within the following two weeks. I completed and video recorded the semi-structured interviews through an online platform, Zoom, and each first-round interview lasted 60-90 for minutes. Smith et al. (2009) discussed employing semi-structured interviews to generate a rich and in-depth narrative of the interviewee as they share the understanding and meaning-making of their lived experiences. I was mindful of the risks of my assumptions and biases leading to misunderstandings of the participants' narratives. To manage these risks, I engaged in self-reflection during the data collection process and allowed additional follow-up interviews requested by participants in case of verifiable confirmations (Alase, 2017).

The Zoom software enables users to record video and audio files and allows Otter.ai, a transcription software, to gather the verbal content of the interviews for analysis. To decrease the cost of possible technical problems, I used an additional sound recording device to record an audio version of each interview. Once I confirmed the quality of the Zoom recordings, I deleted the additional audio recording. I stored all recordings on a password-protected laptop and Box, an encrypted platform. The laptop and the Box platform provided secure storage for the interview recordings and transcription, plus maximized the confidentiality of the participants, as indicated in the ACA Code of Ethics (2014). I also asked participants to create a pseudonym

within the research results to continue to uphold confidentiality within any disseminated versions of this study (ACA, 2014).

I asked the following questions during the first-round interviews:

1. What were your experiences teaching the master's-level research and program evaluation course as a pre-tenured counselor educator?
2. What stood out for you during your experience(s) with teaching the master's-level research and program evaluation course?
3. How would you describe the main emotions you experienced teaching the master's-level research and program evaluation course?
4. Have your teaching experiences in the master's-level research and program evaluation course impacted your professional identities? If so, in which way?
5. Have your teaching experiences in the master's-level research and program evaluation course impacted you as a person? If so, in which way?
6. How did you perceive your relationship with your department while teaching the master's-level research and program evaluation course?

To promote this study's trustworthiness, I scheduled an interpreting dialogue with each participant after completing the data analysis for the first-round interviews. After this conversation, I created questions for the second-round interviews based on the data analysis results of the first-round interviews. Once created, I scheduled the second-round interviews with the participants to complete the third data collection stage, and each second-round interview lasted for 30-90 minutes. The final interpreting dialogue took place after I completed my data analysis for the second-round interviews.

Data Analysis Procedures

As mentioned above, IPA prioritizes each participant's distinctive perceptions of the phenomenon and includes an analysis of convergence and divergence, revealing how participants' experiences and meaning-making processes are similar and different (Allan & Eatough, 2016; Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014). Thus, IPA researchers examine each participant's narrative independently and thoroughly and seek to understand as much as possible before progressing to the next (Cassidy et al., 2011).

Finlay (2011) indicated two stages of data analysis in IPA. The first-order analysis is concerned with developing a descriptive account of phenomena through the eyes of each participant as a unique individual (Larkin et al., 2006). In contrast, the second-order analysis allows researchers to move beyond description toward interpretation and explore the meaning-making processes of participants with consideration of contextual factors (Larkin & Thompson, 2011).

I followed the six-step data analysis procedure as Finlay synthesized (2011). After completing the first-round interviews, I utilized an online transcribing tool to obtain deidentified, line-by-line transcriptions of each interview. The first step was reading and rereading the transcriptions (Finlay, 2011). I immersed myself in the original data and created the initial memos, including my free association related to the semantic content. More specifically, I moved through the transcripts line-by-line and listened to the interview audio recording simultaneously. This method provided visual and audio stimuli and increased my attention to verbal and para-verbal components. Hence, I could explore the content of the narratives and the meaning-making of each participant while attending to prominent words and emotions emerging from each participant's sharing. I also took notes to support further interpretation and analysis. Note-taking

procedures include descriptive, linguistic, and conceptual comments (Smith et al., 2009). In the second step, I developed emergent themes in each participant's narrative by focusing on chunks of transcription (Finlay, 2011). The analysis of my notes also helped with generating emergent themes. According to Finlay (2011), the third step involves searching for connections across emergent themes, which allows me to summarize abstract and integrative themes for each participant. The first three steps required my intentional engagement with each participant's experience and meaning-making process and fulfilled the idiographic commitment of IPA.

In the fourth step, I move to the next participant's transcriptions. As guided by Finlay (2011), I attempted to bracket previous themes and keep an open mind for justice to the individuality of every participant. After repeating the abovementioned steps for each individual interview, I looked for patterns across participant cases, which is the fifth step of data analysis (Finlay, 2011). I aimed to examine the convergence and divergence of perceptions and experiences among participants by looking for patterns of shared higher-order qualities and noticing idiosyncratic instances. The final step includes taking interpretations to deeper levels. Finlay (2011) described this process as expanding the analysis by using metaphors and temporal referents and applying other theories as a lens through which to view the analysis.

This systematic data analysis structure allowed me to move between the whole and the parts of the experience as a researcher. It also facilitated the in-depth single-case examination valued in IPA methodology and enriched research findings. Moreover, I took intentional action to uphold reliable findings.

Trustworthiness

Acknowledging the “double hermeneutic” process in IPA, the researcher's experiences, values, and pre-understandings inevitably impact the process of understanding the participants'

experiences and meaning-making, which makes IPA studies vulnerable to threats to trustworthiness (Rodham et al., 2015). Mason (2012) described the requirements on trustworthiness as researchers should demonstrate that “data generation and analysis have not only been appropriate to the research questions but also thorough, careful, honest and accurate (as distinct from true or correct – terms which many qualitative researchers would, of course, wish to reject)” (p. 188). I employed various strategies to protect this research project’s trustworthiness, including prolonged engagement, reflexive journaling, investigator triangulation, and interpreting dialogues.

Prolonged engagement requires researchers to spend enough time on the research topic and develop a strong relationship with the participants (Barusch et al., 2011; Henry, 2015). This process also allows the researcher to learn the contextual information of the participants thoroughly and further supports a comprehensive exploration of the participants’ experiences and meaning-making (Smith et al., 2009). I immersed myself in each participant’s transcriptions to systematically explore emergent themes. Other opportunities for me to engage in prolonged engagement included interpreting dialogues and second-round interviews. These strategies also provided me with increased “time in the field” to work with participants and better understand the content of their meaning-making process, as discussed by Creswell & Poth (2018).

In addition to prolonged engagement, reflexivity journaling is one of the most commonly employed methods in strengthening the rigor of phenomenological studies and assisting the researcher in achieving transparency. Because IPA researchers do not regard their prejudices as inherently “bad,” they take a questioning and dialectical stance on these assumptions and continuously reexamine them against newly gained insights (Fischer, 2009). The commitment to reflexivity does not require researchers to always be value-neutral. Instead, they should develop

an awareness of the ways that their research expresses, reinforces, or undermines the values that they hold (Gabriel, 2018). To this end, I engaged in journaling throughout this study and kept ongoing scrutiny of my reactions, beliefs, and biases. Journaling allowed me to explore how my passion for research training in counselor education may influence my process and keep it from overriding the participants' voices. I received consultations from my dissertation committee chair to gain insights and promote the accuracy of my research project.

Triangulation in qualitative research involves using multiple methods or data sources to gain a comprehensive understanding of phenomena (Carter et al., 2014). Patton (1999) discussed different types of triangulation and described investigator triangulation as multiple researchers working as a team to provide multiple observations and conclusions. This strategy helps minimize the potential bias from one person doing all the analysis and provides means to assess the trustworthiness of the data obtained (Patton, 1999). I employed investigator triangulation by meeting with my dissertation committee chair regularly and exchanging ideas about emergent themes and concept maps.

Additionally, most qualitative studies include a member-checking procedure as an integral part of creating trustworthiness. This strategy typically involves the researcher summarizing the information and asking the participant to determine the accuracy and provide further explanation as needed (Creswell, 2013). Researchers noticed ethical risks related to member-checking, asserting possible emotional and practical burdens on participants (Birt et al., 2012; Varpio et al., 2017) and suggesting "reflexive participant collaboration" as a more accurate description of this strategy in critical participatory research designs (Motulsky, 2021). Candela (2019) focused on the power dynamic between the researcher and the participant in the member-checking process and noted that participants could have different experiences with it. Hence,

researchers should strive to encourage the participants to share ideas and co-construct the analysis. In conducting this research project, I scheduled interpreting dialogues following the first-round and second-round interviews. More importantly, I created a positive and reflective experience for the participants. I hoped the interpreting dialogues would enhance reciprocity, equality, and openness in my relationship with the participants and becomes a conversation of rich and in-depth data (Buchbinder, 2011).

To provide a thorough and accurate representation of my participants' experiences and perspectives, I endeavored to manage threats to trustworthiness. Assessing for accuracy and researcher bias are critical components of maintaining the structural integrity of an IPA project and prioritizing the participants' meaning-making process. Through the actions of prolonged engagement, reflexive journaling, investigator triangulation, and interpreting dialogues, I hoped to promote credibility and manage any threats to trustworthiness throughout this study.

Summary

With the commitment to the systematic exploration of personal experience and meaning-making, IPA draws upon the fundamentals of phenomenology, hermeneutics, and idiography (Miller et al., 2009; Smith & Osborn, 2003). Employing the IPA approach in this research project, I aimed to explore participants' meaning-making process of the teaching experience as a beginning counselor educator in the master's-level research and program evaluation course. I conducted two semi-structured interviews with participants and completed a rigorous data analysis process for each round of interviews. I completed two rounds of interpreting dialogues with participants, one following the initial interview analysis process and the second following the final analysis process, promoting trustworthiness throughout the study. As pre-tenured, tenure track counselor educators continue to grow as instructors and researchers, the teaching

experience in the master's-level research and program evaluation class may contribute uniquely to their journey. Through this study, I explored the participants' lived experiences and facilitate their meaning-making process.

CHAPTER III: ROUND ONE RESULTS

Within this chapter, I provide a detailed account of the emerging themes after completing the first-round interviews with all the participants. According to Smith et al. (2009), IPA researchers concentrate on the idiographic aspect of each participant's narratives. Thus, I analyzed each interview separately and present the results in the "Themes Within Specific Cases" section. After analyzing the individual interview data, I further explored the similarities and differences among the participants' experiences and looked for patterns across participant cases, which was presented in the "Cases within a Theme" section. To promote the trustworthiness of this study and fulfill my philosophical commitment to constructing meaning as a researcher, I engaged the participants in an interpreting dialogue, in which I shared my tentative analysis of the first-round interviews and invited them to create a theme of their narratives that best captures the most important aspect of their lived experiences.

Participants

Participants for this study are pre-tenured, tenure-track counselor educators who have taught the master's-level research course as a core faculty in a CACREP-accredited program. I intentionally excluded potential participants who are currently in their first or second year as a core faculty, hoping that all the interviewed participants already had an opportunity to process and reflect on their adjustment to the faculty role. In response to the researcher's three calls for participants, 15 potential participants responded. Among these potential participants, nine were eligible, and seven responded to my interview invitation emails. As displayed in Table 1, the seven participants have different cultural identities. To better understand the participants' professional backgrounds, I also collected data on the participants' institutions and years of teaching the master's-level research course, as presented in Table 2.

Table 1*Participants' Demographic Information*

Name	Gender	Age	Race and Ethnicity	Other Cultural Factors
Andrés	Male	35	Latino	First generation
Joseph	Male	57	White	Italian
Molly	Female	36	White/Caucasian	None
Natalie	Female	34	Asian	None
Piper	Female	42	Black	None
The Divine Miss M	Female	42	White non-Hispanic	Ethnically Jewish, Disability community, from low SES
Winifred Sanderson	Non-binary	35	White European	Queer non-binary

Table 2*Participants' Professional Background*

Name	Year of Graduation	Doctoral Institution Type	Current Institution Type	Year(s) of Teaching the Course	Institution Type(s) of Teaching the Course
Andrés	2017-2018	R2	D/PU	2019-2020 2020-2021 2021-2022 2022-2023	R1 D/PU
Joseph	2017-2018	D/PU	D/PU	2019-2020	D/PU
Molly	2019-2020	R2	Master's University	2020-2021 2021-2022 2022-2023	Master's University
Natalie	2020-2021	R2	R2	2022-2023	R2
Piper	2017-2018	R2	Master's University	2018-2019 2019-2020 2020-2021	Master's University
The Divine Miss M	2017-2018	D/PU	R2	2017-2018 2018-2019 2019-2020	R2
Winifred Sanderson	2017-2018	R1	Master's University	2018-2019 2019-2020 2020-2021	Master's University

Note. I refer to the Carnegie classification of institutions of higher education by “Institutional Type.” In Table 2, “R1” stands for Doctoral Universities - Very high research activity. “R2” stands for Doctoral Universities - High research activity. “D/PU” stands for Doctoral/Professional Universities. “Master’s University” stands for Master’s Colleges and Universities.

Themes Within Specific Cases

IPA methodology draws upon the fundamentals of phenomenology, hermeneutics, and

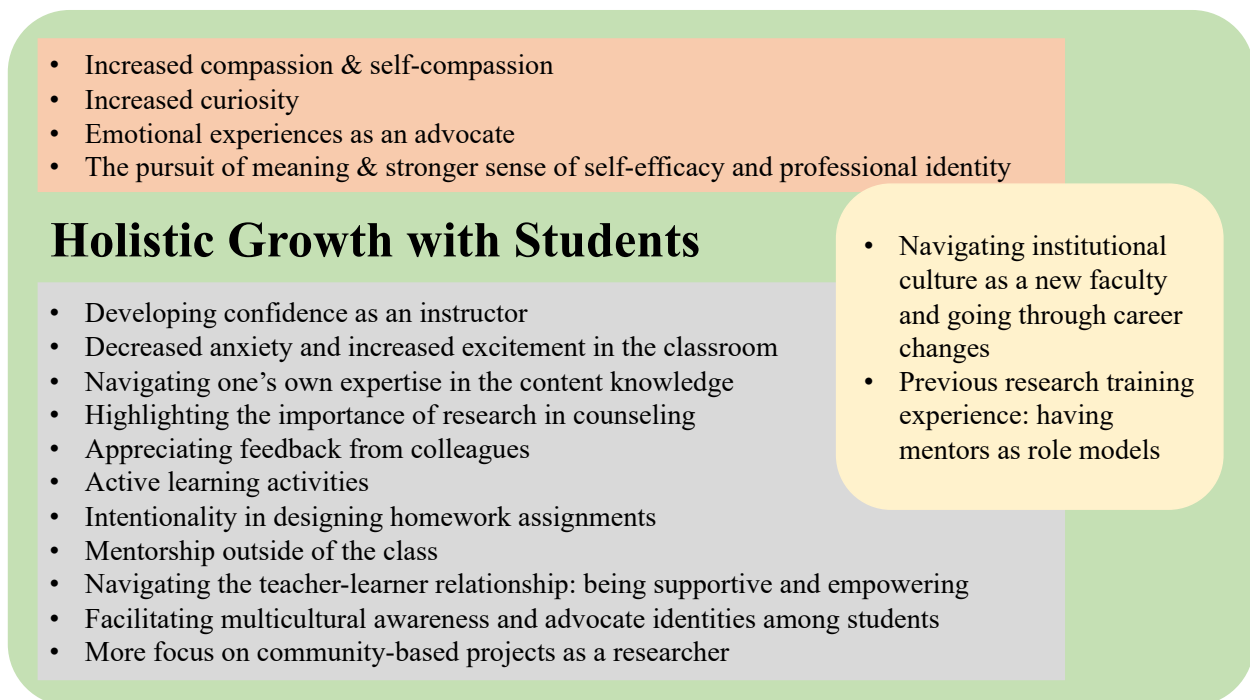
idiography and prompts researchers to review each participant's identified themes separately (Finlay, 2011). Thus, I present the emerging themes within each of the participants' cases independently, in addition to visual representations that are constructed based on the participants' themes. Participants explored the transcript, notes, and concept map and shared their thoughts and feelings during the interpreting dialogue. In the concept maps for each individual participant, I summarized their immediate teaching experiences in a gray box and put their perceived growth in an orange box. The yellow boxes include the participants' peripheral experiences and professional backgrounds related to their experiences teaching the master's-level research course. As IPA researchers attend to the convergence and divergence of perceptions and experiences among participants (Smith et al., 2009), I use blue boxes in the concept maps to highlight the unique aspects of each participant's narratives.

Andrés

Andrés, the chosen pseudonym for participant one, identifies as a Latino, cisgender man with he/his pronouns. He identified the theme of his lived experience in teaching the master's-level research course as "Holistic Growth with Students." Figure 1 represents the emerging themes for Andrés.

Figure 1

“Holistic Growth with Students” Emergent Themes for Andrés



According to his narrative, Andrés started teaching the master's-level research course with “a lot of self-doubts” regarding the content knowledge and questioned his own abilities to do the work (Andrés, Rd 1). He experienced increased confidence and excitement for this course over time. As he shared, his own advocacy work and teaching students to advocate through research play a big role in this increasing excitement. He further explained,

I always light up when I talk about research. I love working with numbers. And I love running different analyses... But I realized, I'm always going back to that social justice piece and how we have to pay attention to even the way that numbers can misrepresent communities or minoritized groups. And I'm always trying to encourage students to think about the ways that even when we have good intentions, through our research, yeah, how we can further marginalize groups that we want to support through our research, you know, even just by mistake or accidentally, when we're not paying attention being

critical or being sensitive. (Andrés, Rd 1)

To facilitate students' interest in research, Andrés chose to integrate active learning activities into the homework assignments in the master's-level research course, and he expressed a passion for providing mentorship for students outside of the classroom. With a commitment to student-centered teaching, Andrés highlighted the importance of having empathy for the students and providing support,

I just developed so much more sensitivity, and empathy. And I had to remind myself, you know, number one, I don't have to be perfect as a faculty member or a professor. Number two, I'm still learning and I have to give myself some grace. And then number three, it's like, these students need support. (Andrés, Rd 1)

A unique aspect of the lived experience of Andrés is that he explored different institutional culture as a new faculty and went through career changes. He spent his first four years as a faculty member at two different R1 universities. He said, "because teaching the research class, I believe, actually made me want to leave." (Andrés, Rd 1) He found that he could not do "the community engaged research" as a pre-tenured faculty member at an R1 university and ended up doing research just to get the publications and fulfill the institutional requirements (Andrés, Rd 1). Andrés said,

I want to be in a place where I have more time that I can devote to doing research that involves being integrated in the community, spending more time building relationships and doing things that are more meaningful to me, which is what ended up pushing me to apply for a position at a doctoral professional university, a smaller liberal arts university, where now I have more time to pursue the research that I want to do. (Andrés, Rd 1)

Andrés also shared his personal growth in the teaching experience. He said he became "such a

more compassionate person” and gained increased self-compassion. “It’s also increased my awareness of the world around me and community... In more than any other class, I’ve seen students challenged, and I’ve seen them struggle... It helps me to see another side of students.”

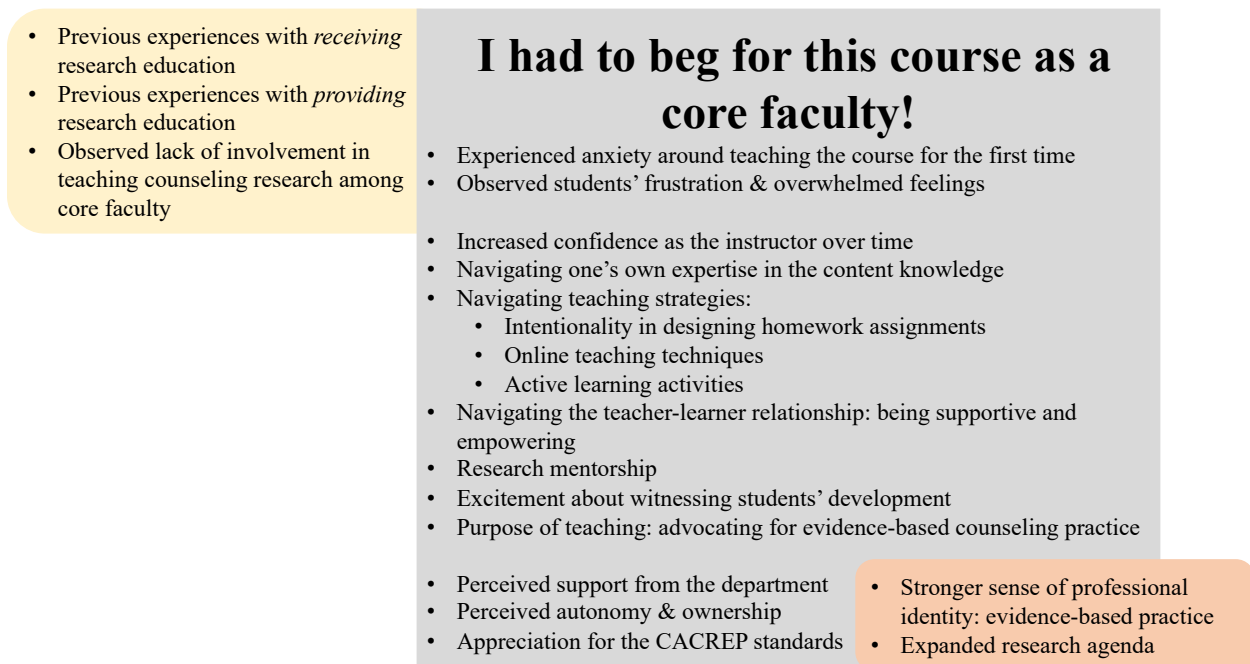
(Andrés, Rd 1)

Joseph

Joseph, participant two, identifies as a White, cisgender man, and he identified the theme of his lived experience in teaching the master’s-level research course as “I had to beg for this course as a core faculty!” Figure 2 represents the emergent themes for Joseph.

Figure 2

“I had to beg for this course as a core faculty!” Emergent Themes for Joseph



Joseph works as a core faculty member at an online institution. He reported experiencing anxiety around teaching the master’s-level research course for the first time as he observed his students’ frustration and overwhelmed feelings around research. He identified his strengths in qualitative research methods and navigated quantitative research methods to get ready for

teaching. As Joseph said,

For me, personally, I'm not a numbers person. One class, I have this whole worksheet with number, you know, will ask statistics. And so, I literally had to get the answers. I have used the answer key because I, I wasn't completely sure on some of the answers. That when I had to explain them, I was able to explain them to students, but I had to literally sit back and take, you know, take a little bit of time for myself, because I almost have to relearn some stuff. (Joseph, Rd 1)

Other than integrating active learning activities into the homework assignments in the master's-level research course, Joseph intentionally introduced the real research world to his students through research mentorship,

Now we make into four groups of three or three groups of four. And what I do is I meet with each group individually aside from class time to talk them through their project. Because they'll be like, oh no, as you said, this research idea was way too general. And then I said, we'll work it through and we get it. We cannot do everything and let's narrow down what exactly parts that is most interesting to you and what's feasible for you to do as a project. (Joseph, Rd 1)

Joseph also shared his lived experience of teaching the master's-level research course as an adjunct professor for another CACREP-accredited program. He noticed that some institutions tended to assign the research course to adjunct professor. He said,

So, I did the first time I taught research as an adjunct at another college. And they were like, hey, we could use an adjunct. Can you teach research? Yes, I can do research, I want to get my foot in the door... But at my institution, I led a trip where I could teach research on that trip. So, I requested to teach research class as a meta term before that, so

I knew what was in it. But other than that, I probably will never see research again at my institution, because there's not a class that they need their core faculty to teach on there. I probably will not teach that again there at all. That's an adjunct course in a lot of institutions. (Joseph, Rd 1)

As he is no longer teaching the master's-level research course, I asked about how he stopped teaching it. He answered,

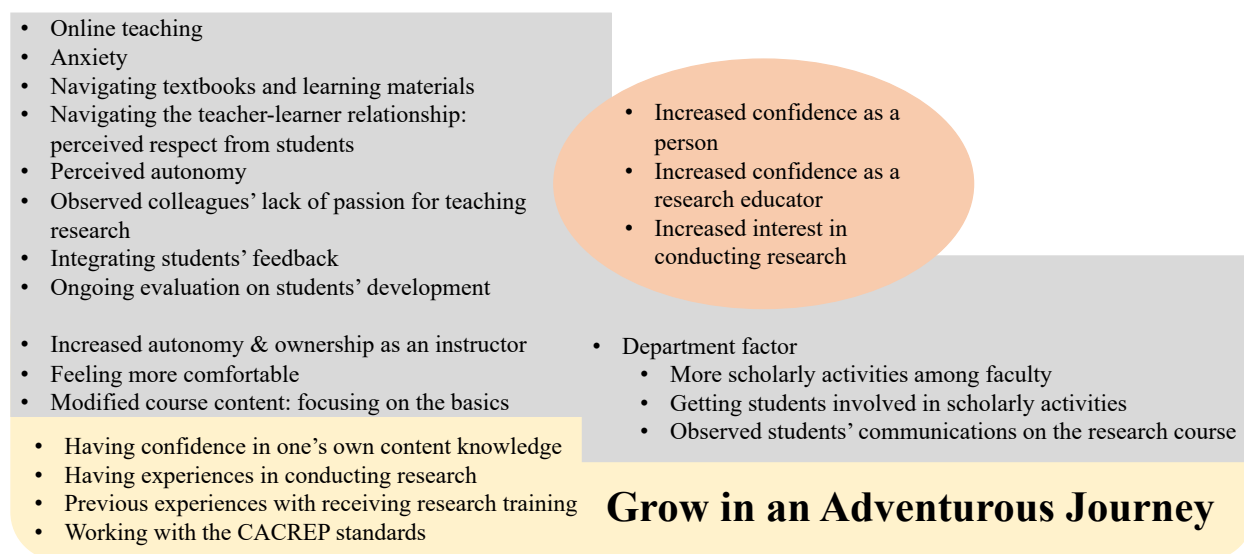
It's administrative the department but I understand it, though. It was because of FTE numbers. You really need to use your core faculty to teach specific classes. So, I need to either be teaching mental health counseling or school counseling. If I teach a research class, it hurts our FTE because somebody else can't teach something else. So, it's not my decision. But I completely understand it's not like one of those. Hey, I'm gonna argue at you for an hour on it. No, I understand that. That's why I don't say anything about it. (Joseph, Rd 1)

Molly

Molly, participant three, identifies as a White, cisgender woman, and she identified the theme of her lived experience in teaching the master's-level research course as "Grow in an Adventurous Journey." Figure 3 represents the emerging themes for Molly.

Figure 3

“Grow in an Adventurous Journey” Emergent Themes for Molly



Molly started her journey as a core faculty member in fall 2020, and she taught the master's-level research course online due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Molly shared that she took multiple research courses as a doctoral student in counselor education and developed her self-confidence in the content knowledge regarding research methods in counseling. Her anxiety around teaching the research course was related to online teaching and the observed “stigma” of the course (Molly, Rd 1). As she explained,

And then I think research in itself had kind of its own stigma or its own anxiety. I think students came into the classroom with that anxiety of like, oh, research is going to be a hard class. I've heard that this class is hard. I'm not going to like this class. So, I think there was that extra kind of pressure of like, students are already preparing to this class, how do I help make it fun? How do I make it relatable? So, I definitely think I felt that anxiety. (Molly, Rd 1)

As a first-year faculty, she perceived a lot of autonomy and trust from her colleagues in the

department. She also observed her colleagues' lack of passion for teaching research.

We're a really small department and a small faculty... And so, I would say our program director, and she actually taught part of the course before I did, but really gives us a lot of autonomy that as long as we've got the appropriate CACREP standards, you really can teach the courses in whatever way works for us. We don't have a lot of oversight or micromanaging. That feels like we have a lot of autonomy. (Molly, Rd 1)

Molly identified a significant component of her teaching experience in the master's-level research course was integrating students' feedback to meet them where they are. She reflected on her effort in exploring different textbooks and selecting appropriate learning materials that focus on basic concepts. Molly also took students' training backgrounds into consideration and tried to set realistic goals in the research course. Although the program required students to complete at least one undergraduate-level research or statistics course, most students did not have a profound understanding of research methods. Oftentimes, students, especially those having been away from school for years, did not remember much from the previous research training. "Just really being accepting of like, you know, some people came to this program with a background in theater, or a background in something totally unrelated." (Molly, Rd 1)

With more experience as a research educator and a better understanding of her student population, Molly developed more ownership as an instructor and gained more self-confidence as a person. She also shared that the leaders in her institution called for more involvement in scholarly activities among faculty and students, which might inspire more research mentorship outside of the classroom.

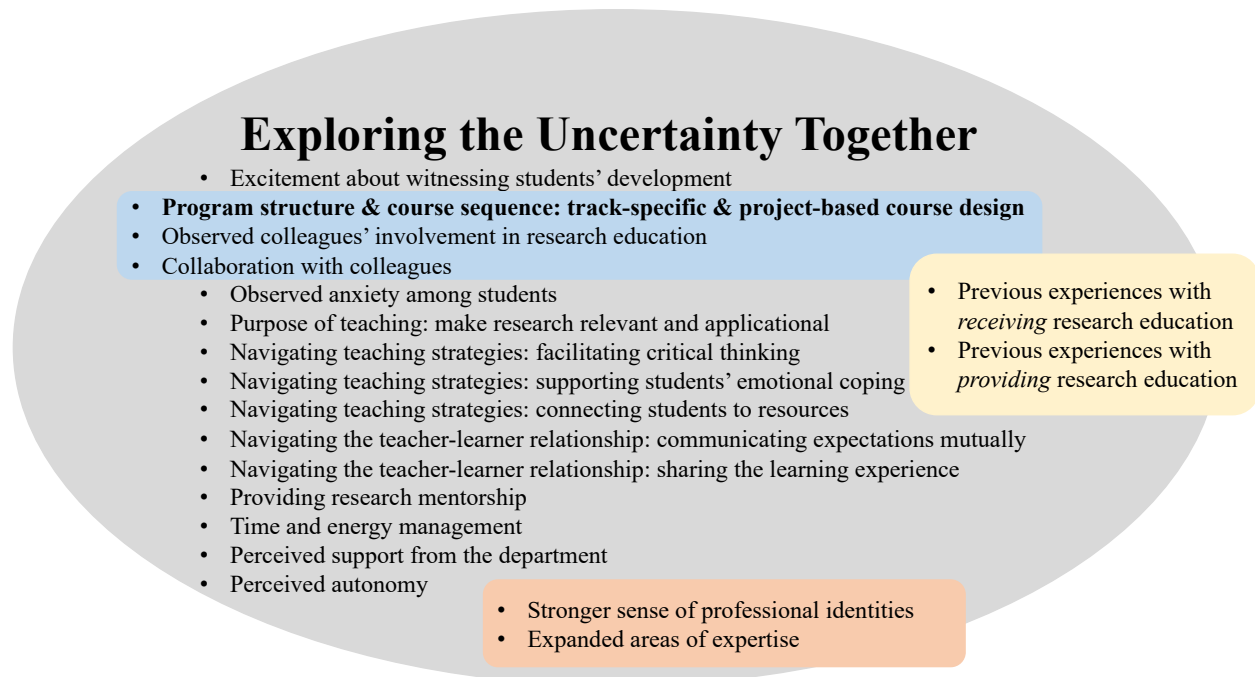
Natalie

Natalie, participant four, identifies as an Asian, cisgender woman, and she identified the

theme of her lived experience in teaching the master's-level research course as "Exploring the Uncertainty Together." Figure 4 represents the emerging themes for Natalie.

Figure 4

"Exploring the Uncertainty Together" Emergent Themes for Natalie



Natalie is in her third year as a core faculty and is one of the three instructors of the master-level research course in her program. According to Natalie, her program delivers the research course in a very unique way. She described it as an "applicational experience of research." (Natalie, Rd 1) More specifically, the program divided the research training into two semesters, with each being one and a half credits. During the first course of "proposal development" in the fall semester, students formulate a research proposal. Later, in the second course in the spring semester, they implement the proposal at their actual field sites. The course is designed to be practical and applicational, with students applying the different terminology related to research to a real-life study they will conduct collaboratively. Natalie guided the students in providing and putting together a research proposal, which they then submitted to the

IRB at the university for approval. Once approved, they will implement their research study, which culminates in a capstone defense presentation at the end of the year. The defense presentation is not meant to be intimidating, but rather a celebratory experience where students present the results of their year-long study to their faculty and peers. Natalie is clear in telling her students that the kinds of results they get do not determine whether they pass the defense or not. Even if their small-scale group counseling intervention does not result in any changes, they should still report it, and the results do not reflect on the quality of their work. The research course is designed to have a practical impact and be a collaborative experience for the students, with the defense presentation being a culmination of their hard work.

In the first-round interview, Natalie talked about her excitement to collaborate with her students and the support she received from other research educators in the department. As a new faculty member, she perceived the autonomy to practice her teaching philosophy and experiment with new ideas in the classroom, such as inviting guest speakers and providing information sessions for a combined class. Instead of experiencing a lot of anxiety, she observed students' overwhelmed feelings around conducting their research projects since the process involves so many uncertain aspects. In response, she approached the teacher-learner relationship with empathy and provided support for students' emotional coping. Natalie's work also involves with a lot of project management and research mentorship,

I have nine projects to manage. But nine very different projects are also just a lot. So, I tried to create opportunities where they like I give feedback... I tried to give ongoing feedback, I set deadlines... So that we can stay organized.... If you need an extra day, extra week, like whatever, just communicate with me, and we'll figure it out. But we set deadlines so that everybody's kind of like roughly on the same page... I try to

communicate like, okay, my goal is to get this feedback to you by next week. And so, I try to keep it. But if I haven't, I'm like, okay, something came up. I needed a couple of days, like, please be patient with me. And they're very patient... I try to find ways to make the workload reasonable for me, as well as for them. (Natalie, Rd 1)

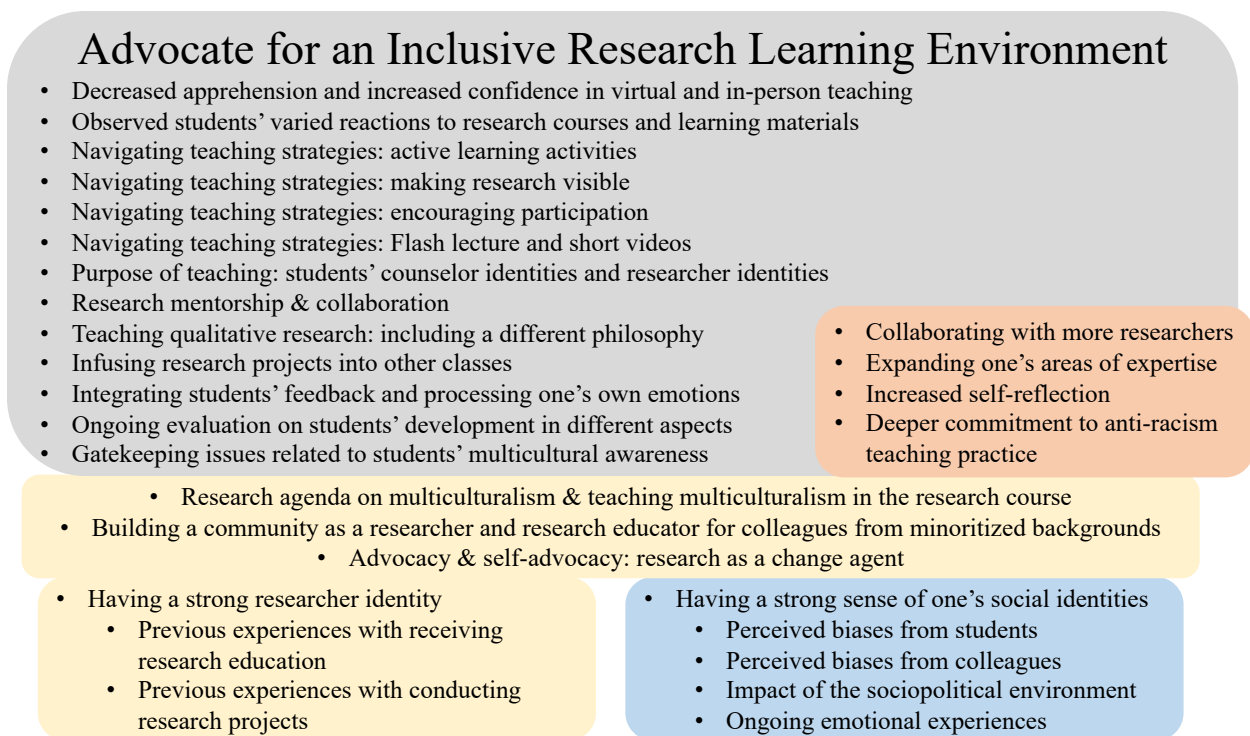
Natalie said that the teaching experience enhanced her “professional identity as a counselor educator in terms of the education piece.” (Natalie, Rd 1) And she also expressed an appreciation for the expanded areas of expertise through collaborative work with her students.

Piper

Piper, participant five, identifies as a Black, cis-gendered woman, and she identified the theme of her lived experience in teaching the master's-level research course as “Advocate for an Inclusive Research Learning Environment.” Figure 5 represents the emerging themes for Piper.

Figure 5

“Advocate for an Inclusive Research Learning Environment” Emergent Themes for Piper



Piper started her teaching experience in the master's-level research course with a strong sense of her researcher identity. She aimed to facilitate the students' researcher identity development. As she shared,

One of the things I started doing was providing those students that call participation encouragers, also known as bonus points, for students who may have written, you know, like newsletter articles may have engaged in different scholarship in the forms of journal articles or submit for scholarly presentations. And that was also the help promoting its two purposes, one to enhance their student's professional identity, but also help with their students cultivating that research identity. (Piper, Rd 1)

Piper highlighted her research agenda on multiculturalism and expressed a passion for building a community as a researcher and research educator for colleagues from minoritized backgrounds. Accordingly, Piper's teaching practice in the research course was rooted in her commitment to multiculturalism, and she included research articles on multicultural counseling in the learning materials. She also shared some challenging moments she experienced,

I have received some pushback from some of the students as far as the amount of articles they have to read, or to read about anti-racist practices... I thought it was something that was well-written... This particular student, on the other hand, thought it was inflammatory. And it was like it started concern... They had two articles, but the student focused on this particular one, and I remember, they were like, well, this subject matter can be triggering, but I was like, I want you to think about what happens when you have that client who comes into the helping relationship and they're presenting with this particular issue or if the subject matter is important to them. How are you going to broach this effectively with them in counseling to promote healing? (Piper, Rd1)

In this situation, Piper validated the student's opinions without agreeing. She tried to explain that research involves more than just reliability, validity, and rigor. Piper also recognized the student's unpreparedness to explore qualitative research methods and diverse philosophical foundations. The student was not open to anything outside quantitative research and was getting distracted by the author's identity. Piper emphasized the importance of considering different research methods and being open to diverse perspectives, even if they are outside students' comfort zone.

In her first-round interview, Piper mentioned her social identity as a black woman many times. The perceived biases impacted her exploration of the teacher-learner relationship and her connection with her department. More specifically, when Piper reviewed the teaching evaluations for her research course, she noticed some comments on her physical appearance, mannerisms, and hairstyles instead of her teaching methods or curriculum. She then explained how these comments were related to her social identity.

I had to also take into consideration, I'm in a red state, I'm in a rural area. And also, in a young, black female counselor educator, that was something else that came out with some students that they didn't think I was qualified to teach the course not because I got my degree awarded, not because of the number of years I was in the field... it was a basically well known to my social group membership and condition. (Piper, Rd 1)

Similarly, Piper remembered having a "more fracture" and "more strain" relationship with her department when she was teaching the master's-level research course for the first time (Piper, Rd 1). She recounted, "I know one of my colleagues perceive me as being very deficient and weak, like former colleagues, more or less, I didn't approach it [the master's-level research course] the way they would have liked to been approached by this person." (Piper, Rd 1)

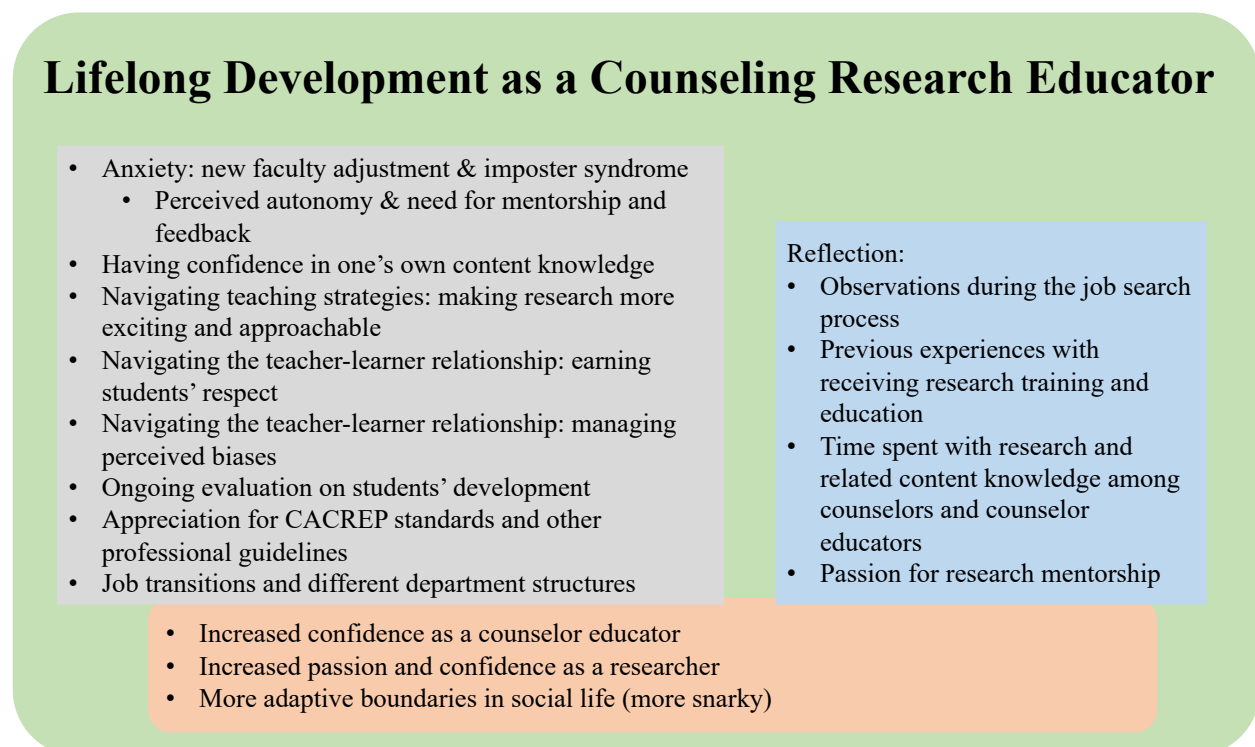
As a research educator, Piper developed a commitment to infusing research projects into other classes. For example, she requires students to do an action research project in a school counseling specialty course that she teaches. Piper shared that she often reflected on her experiences in conducting research projects and providing research education, through which she developed a deeper commitment to anti-racism teaching practice.

The Divine Miss M

The Divine Miss M, participant six, identifies as a White, cisgender woman, and she identified the theme of her lived experience in teaching the master's-level research course as "Lifelong Development as a Counseling Research Educator." Figure 6 represents the emerging themes for the Divine Miss M.

Figure 6

"Lifelong Development as a Counseling Research Educator" Emergent Themes for the Divine Miss M



The Divine Miss M had a “a very quick turnaround and transition” before getting started as a faculty member as she “moved there with like, two days before the semester.” (The Divine Miss M, Rd 1) Although having confidence in her content knowledge on research methods, she perceived a lot of autonomy and attempted to make the course content approachable and exciting. The Divine Miss M said she experienced a lot of anxiety as a new faculty,

At the very beginning, like I wish there was somebody, you know, who was just micromanaging my every move, because I felt really insecure about the material and about the presentation... And I didn't really wish for a micromanager. That was an exaggeration... It just felt very up to me. So, I feel like there was a lot of responsibility and pressure that I put on myself to make sure I was doing what would prepare the students and also getting a lot of pushbacks from the students and questioning which, of course, I felt more insecure about what I was doing. And I second guess myself a lot when the students were like, that's not what validity is. Yeah, I think, nope, I just looked at is I was right... Just kind of that experience of like getting comfortable in my own skin as an educator at that first institution. (The Divine Miss M, Rd 1)

The Divine Miss M explored the difficult moments she experienced in navigating the teacher-learner relationship as a first-year faculty. “The students were very much challenging my authority and my ability to teach the material like they didn't listen, they didn't do the reading.” (The Divine Miss M, Rd 1) She mentioned students' “clearly verbalized” anger and wondered if these challenges were related to her “physical presentations in the classroom” or way of being as an instructor (The Divine Miss M, Rd 1) She further explicated,

I'm, you know, not a dominant personality at all, I like a very collaborative classroom.

But I find that if I don't have clear and concrete expectations like I will not accept these

assignments late, I will not accept these assignments... I have to say like, there, there are very clear boundaries and expectations, and they're rigorous, and I expect exceptional work from students. And then I can have the freedom to kind of engage them and excuse things and move forward. But if I start soft, I typically wind up at the end of the semester, with students who just have not done what they need to do. So, at the same time, as like wanting to be sensitive and collaborative with them, I also want to give them like a clear structure and very clear understanding that there are things they have to do. That's kind of like, gentle and firm. (The Divine Miss M, Rd 1)

Meanwhile, she explored some perceived biases and stereotypes in teaching the research course for the first time. She remembered receiving more respect from students in some specific classes, "When it comes to the softer skills, counseling that students take me a little more seriously." (The Divine Miss M, Rd 1) However, navigating the teacher-learner relationship in the master's-level research course was harder.

There's a lot of like, deference to educators in the population that I work with. But when it comes to those more concrete, like research and assessment, there's almost like the could you possibly know this well enough to teach it to me, was absolutely verbalized my first-semester teaching, and then has been something that I've been a little bit more aware of just recognizing the differences between like when I'm teaching, you know, theories or skills, techniques, that those like students really lean in hard and think that I have a lot to like, give them and in the more academic skills, that there's a little bit of question like, I have to prove myself before I earn their trust. (The Divine Miss M, Rd 1)

The Divine Miss M mentioned her experiences with different course sequences at different institutions and the gatekeeping issues related to the master's-level research course. "In my first

institution, they did the research course very early in the program and use it as a gatekeeping tool, so that wouldn't get like overly invested in the program, if they just didn't have the academic strength." (The Divine Miss M, Rd 1) She then described a different approach to the course in her current program and shared her insights.

They take the research course, at the beginning of their second year... And that's been working fine. Like I find mid-program students are a little more in swing with things. So, they're not figuring out how to be a master student, and looking at content that makes them anxious to even consider exist in the world. So, I feel like a little bit later, definitely not first semester, because there just is so much adjustment to being in a graduate program. (The Divine Miss M, Rd 1)

The Divine Miss M discussed the strengths and challenges of different program structures. She did not express a clear preference or a strong opinion on the course sequence. She wanted students to have more recourses in graduate school and skills to cope with stress related to learning research methods. Still, she believed counselor educators should be aware of gatekeeping and remediation issues in teaching the master's-level research class.

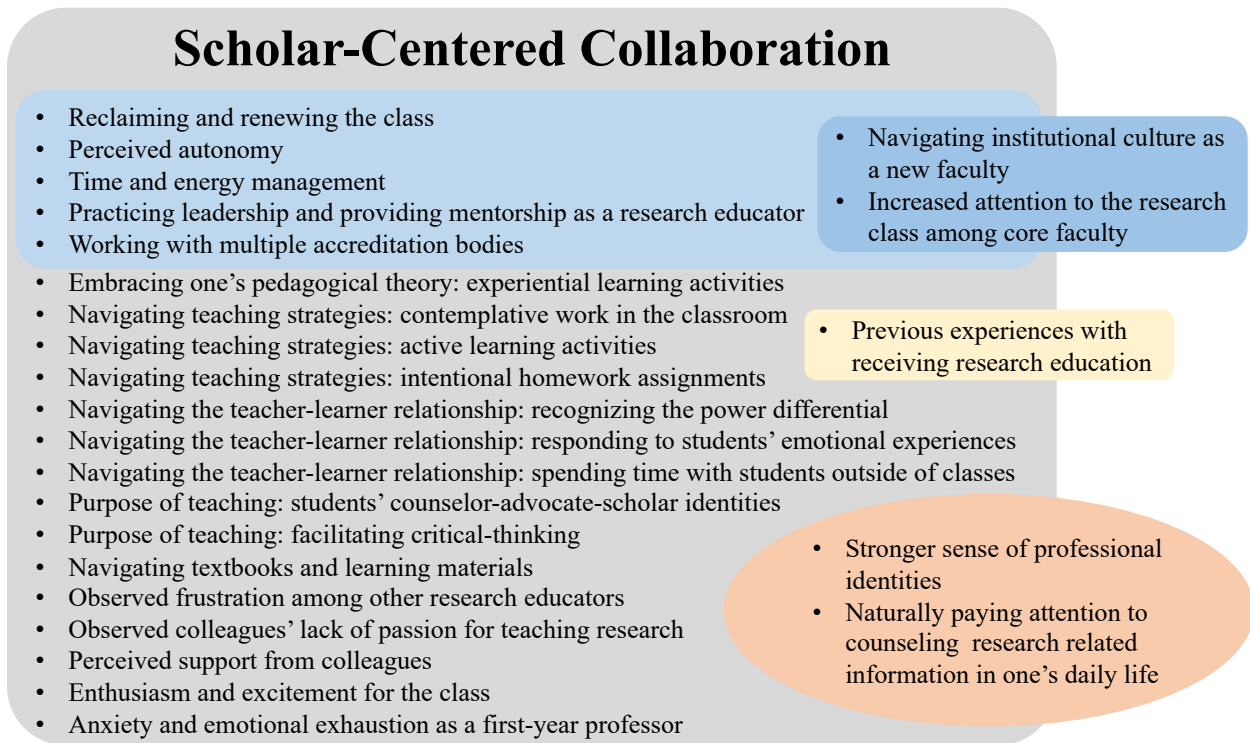
A unique aspect of the Divine Miss M's narrative is her observations of the job market, and she explained, "When I interviewed and was looking for a job right out of school, a lot of places said that they were looking for somebody who could teach the course. So of course, I said I can do it." (The Divine Miss M, Rd 1)

Winifred Sanderson

Winifred Sanderson, participant seven, identifies as a White, queer, and they identified the theme of their lived experience in teaching the master's-level research course as "Scholar-Centered Collaboration." Figure 7 represents the emerging themes for Winifred Sanderson.

Figure 7

“Scholar-Centered Collaboration” Emergent Themes for Winifred Sanderson



Winifred Sanderson had the unique experience of “reclaiming the course” (Winifred Sanderson, Rd 1) as it was not specifically for the counseling program before they started teaching at their institution. They perceived a lot of autonomy and experienced challenges in time and energy management during the reclaiming and renewing process. For example, they discussed the increased workload for the instructors after reclaiming the master’s-level research course.

We had to alter assignments, there was still really close already. But that also meant that for us, we’re not just grading their drafts, and giving feedback. We’re also reviewing the peer review feedback to make sure when no one’s being cruel, or coercive, which I’ve never found, but I always check and that people are getting actual constructive feedback. (Winifred Sanderson, Rd 1)

To facilitate students' critical-thinking awareness and ideas, they gave particular instructions regarding the peer review assignment, "I don't want you to correct grammar. That's not what I'm asking you to do... I want you to look at the content, and give feedback on whether conceptually you understand and what the missing pieces are." (Winifred Sanderson, Rd 1) Despite the extra grading and inviting guest speakers, Winifred Sanderson also changed the format of students' final project talks from poster sessions to roundtable presentations.

During the first-round interview, Winifred Sanderson highlighted their observations on students' traumatic responses to the research course.

And what I really discovered in that first year of teaching was not as they don't like it, there's actually some real trauma there. Like, and so I'm really reading the research about, specifically math and statistics and the anxiety and trauma related to that...

Because the students really did have fear and trauma, and imposter syndrome coming in, and just the fear of doing research, but also from what had happened to them in previous math and science classes. (Winifred Sanderson, Rd 1)

When being asked about how they realized the students' fear and traumatic responses, Winifred Sanderson mentioned that "someone stayed after class and cried for 30 minutes" to process their complicated emotional reactions to the research course (Winifred Sanderson, Rd 1). Based on these observations, Winifred Sanderson integrated contemplative work into their teaching practice and intentionally spent more time with students outside of the class.

I always used contemplative work. But when I started, I started realizing that I needed more time for contemplative work because the beginning of our class, because the anxiety was so high. And from my first year till now, this is my fifth year, I've really noticed. I increase the time I take at the beginning of classes to help students adjust. So, I

start with a check-in, which I always did, but really started making that check-in process, a check-in on the anxiety that they're feeling because it was really specific. (Winifred Sanderson, Rd 1)

Winifred Sanderson also shared an increased interest in teaching the research course among their colleagues in the department. They had seen the master's-level research course being "neglected" when they joined the program, and they realized, "It's a risk to teach it with that evaluations piece." (Winifred Sanderson, Rd 1) After successfully teaching the course and reshaping the "educational research course" to a counseling research course, they saw more faculty members teaching it. Hence, they became a mentor for other research educators in the program, started to have regular meetings for class preparation, and provided support such as keeping everyone updated and helping with technology issues. They expressed a happy and pride feeling when talking about these changes.

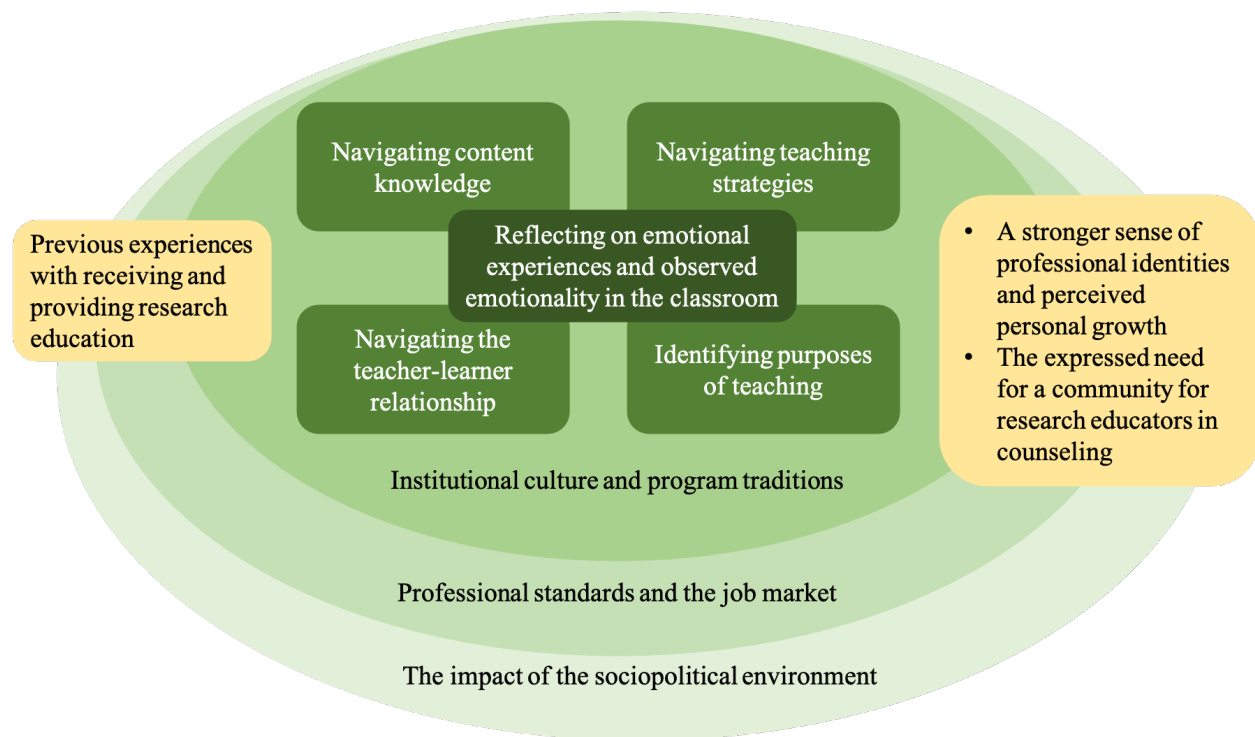
Winifred Sanderson referred to students in their research course as "scholars" during the interview process. With the commitment to "framing the class through the counselor-scholar-advocate lens" and "feeling with the scholars," Winifred Sanderson identified the theme of their lived experience in teaching the master's-level research course as "Scholar-Centered Collaboration."

Cases within a Theme

This section discusses the cases within a theme, or collective analysis across all participants. I explore the emerging themes after completing the first-round interviews and provide rich descriptions from each participants' interview to support for these themes. Figure 8 is a concept map illustrating the emerging themes representative of the participants' lived experiences.

Figure 8

Collective Themes: Emerging Themes across All Seven Participants



Emotionality

All seven participants shared their observations of students' anxiety around taking a research course, and most of them shared their own emotional experiences in teaching the master's-level research course. For example, Natalie shared, "They're overwhelmed... When I check in with them, I'm like, Okay, how is everyone feeling? And usually, they're just like, stressed, overwhelmed, because it is a really large undertaking." (Natalie, Rd 1) Similarly, Joseph said, "it was a little bit overwhelming at first, because it's such a hard class to teach." (Joseph, Rd 1) Andrés observed an increased "mutual excitement" in the master's-level research course throughout the semester (Andrés, Rd 1). He believed the increased excitement among students was because they could spend more time and energy on their areas of interest and perceived more autonomy.

Meanwhile, some other participants highlighted the emotional work they experienced when responding to students' anxiety and fear. Winifred Sanderson mentioned their emotional responses and emotional regulation process in teaching the master's-level research course. Over time, they noticed students' responses to anxiety look differently and some could "get a little pushy." (Winifred Sanderson, Rd 1) They attempted to meet students' emotional needs and encountered challenges, "It's also a lot of emotional labor that I put into the class... It gets emotionally exhausting to teach the class when you're engaging as a community... That's a lot of work." (Winifred Sanderson, Rd 1) Thus, Winifred Sanderson observed themselves vacillate between feeling excited about the research class and feeling exhausted because of all the work. Thus, they started to schedule a break around midterms when the anxiety spiked. As they summarized,

I usually take more space during those times to get back to the people because I'm responding to how they're responding to me. And trying to understand their motivations behind that response and help them get to a more comfortable place... (Winifred Sanderson, Rd 1)

Navigating Content Knowledge

All seven participants discussed the content knowledge aspect of the master's-level research course in a counseling program. According to several participants, they had to put in extra effort to improve their content knowledge. Andrés mentioned, "I'm not as skilled in this area of research, or statistics or whatever." (Andrés, Rd 1) The Divine Miss M said, "Do I really know this about, what if they ask a question and I don't know the answer... Like really questioning if I understood the depth of the material to be able to answer anywhere it could possibly go." (The Divine Miss M, Rd 1)

On the other hand, more participants talked about their struggles with creating a meaningful and feasible course curriculum. Molly shared her experiences of simplifying the course content to meet the students where they were. Relatedly, Winifred Sanderson shared a collective effort in creating and modifying the curriculum of this course,

I have other faculty members teaching the other sections... We're usually in contact... Like, hey, this content is not going over well, how's it working in your section? Or like, yeah, we need to spend more time in this area... It also comes with us supporting each other with their supportive faculty, especially when we're working on a course together. We're communicating what we're seeing are their student concerns or their content concerns. Every single year we've changed the textbook because we cannot find a good one based on the feedback from those kinds of meetings. (Winifred Sanderson, Rd 1)

Navigating Teaching Strategies

The most commonly mentioned teaching strategy was active learning activity, which was often combined with a group format. Natalie shared the overall process of a track-specific and project-based master's-level research course, and Winifred Sanderson talked about the scholars' research projects and roundtable presentations. In the first-round interview, Andrés shared his decision of shifting the individual research proposal assignment to a group project.

I've shifted from students doing individual proposals to them doing group proposals... It helps the students understand that research should not be individualized, it shouldn't be work that you only do as an individual, but it's a team effort... I want students to understand that the research process has to involve other people to make it stronger to get to receive feedback, so that they can understand how to collaborate on building a design that is rigorous, that is critical, that pays attention to all the different factors... Now

they're dealing with opposing opinions and more confusion, because there's more voices involved in the research. And yesterday, I met with one of the groups and they said, gosh, you know, I thought we were on the right track. And now we have so much more work to do. And I said, welcome to research... This is the research process. (Andrés, Rd 1)

Other teaching strategies include inviting guest speakers, creating Flash lectures or short videos, encouraging participation, contemplative work in the classroom, and sharing one's own research experiences. As Piper shared,

If I talk about this really difficult concept, and let's say, I see the students or zoning out there, like, the student was like, what if you do like, seven- or 10-minute-long videos, on this particular just the one that comes up, like you come in class, and you just focus on that. And that's what I started doing that third time I taught the course, and it worked...

When we were talking about alpha, beta, and in power, I had lost the students when I got the beta, like, they were all with me with alpha. And I'm just like, giving them all these examples. And they were just like, I didn't realize I only had like, this one that was focused on who was like, I got it, like everybody else was going... I started doing the shorter videos, the students who might have been like, lost in the dust, watch it and that way not boring that one student who got it. (Piper, Rd 1)

Natalie and Winifred Sanderson both talked about inviting guest speakers. Natalie chose to invite the librarian and highlighted her intention to connect students with specific resources. However, Winifred Sanderson attended to the power differential in the classroom and chose to invite graduate students as guest speaker.

Because you're the professor in the class. It's like, oh, you're a doctor. So, whatever you say, is kind of like a little unrelatable... I started bringing in guest lecturers who were

either about to defend their dissertation, master's-level researchers doing research, and I brought them in to talk about what they did. So, if I was doing narrative, I brought in someone who did narrative research, they did the first 30 minutes, and it was basically a practice dissertation defense. Yeah, it would answer question... And I think not just hearing from me, was really good, because my stories can be unrelatable. Because I had finished a dissertation. I'm still doing research. But I had finished that section... There was a disconnect of bringing in masters level researchers, PhD level researchers, right.

They're doing it. And they could relate more to those stories. (Winifred Sanderson, Rd 1)

Molly found sharing her lived experiences with conducting research helpful in teaching the master's-level research course.

They really appreciate when faculty have experiences of their own to share... When I taught the course, I was in the midst of working on a research project, and we were running some regressions. So, it was nice to have a goal, and not just have to make up examples, because I'm not always great at coming up with things on the fly. So, it was nice to have some things to pull from and to be able to talk about it. We did a study and I was able to talk about the things that went wrong... We really didn't find much. And so, we were able to talk about, well, part of the problem is we designed our survey before we solidified our research question. So, it was tough to answer the question with the answer. So, I think it's been good actively engaging in research, to have kind of that context to be able to share and give examples. I think that's been really helpful. (Molly, Rd 1)

Navigating the Teacher-Learner Relationship

All seven participants emphasized the importance of having empathy for students. For instance, Joseph used a simple class activity as an ice-breaker at the beginning of the semester.

I think early on, well, the first time was frustration or overwhelming... They're like, oh, I hate this class. And so, I bring it up right away, I say how many people here really don't want to be here because of this class. And I, in like, like almost a whole class raise their hand and I raised my hands. I'm saying now I'm raising my hand, because when I was a master's student, I felt why. Now, I love research. And I explain why. And, you know, it's one of the you get some people who like, oh, yeah, he just, you know, talking, his research is awful, you get some I totally get. But what I explained to him was this, here's what and this is why I think it is important class. (Joseph, Rd 1)

Natalie also discussed her way of supporting students.

I totally empathize with that process, because they're doing the brunt of the work of the writing the data collection, and I'm really here to guide them and mentor them through the process and support them, of course. So, I think that, yes, I can't, and I tell them, I can't do anything about your stress or feeling of bounce by this, because ultimately, you're gonna have to do this work. But what I can do is I'm going to be here with you every step along the way to give you feedback to help alleviate any stress to provide clarifications, answer your questions. (Natalie, Rd 1)

On the other hand, new professors, especially those with marginalized identities, may face challenges in earning students' respect and managing perceived biases. As mentioned in the "Themes Within Specific Cases" section, Piper and the Divine Miss M thoroughly discussed how they experienced stereotype threats related to their cultural identities. In her first year of full-time teaching, The Divine Miss M perceived more respect from students in other courses than in the research course. And Piper received comments on her suits and hairstyles in her teaching evaluation.

Identifying Purposes of Teaching

As mentioned in the previous sections, the participants often started their teaching experiences in the research course with observations of students' fear, anxiety, frustration, and lack of motivation. These observations sometimes brought instructors complicated feelings and led them to rethink their purposes of teaching. The participants reflected on their intentions and tried to integrate this meaning-making into their teaching practice.

In the first-round interviews, most participants discussed the goal of making research relevant to students' counselor identities and highlighted evidence-based counseling practice. As Joseph said, "If you don't know how to consume research, consume appropriate research, ever going to be a better counselor?" (Joseph, R1) He then expounded it with a few examples of promoting the evidence base for diverse counseling theories, modalities, and interventions. He added,

So, I tell them how important it is to keep up to date with your profession. And that's really what this is, we're trying to teach them the importance of research and how to read research and how to know what's legitimate research... And this can help them in life...

Basically, research is important because our profession is evolving. (Joseph, Rd 1)

Some participants shared their emphasis on multicultural competencies in teaching the master's-level research course. For example, Piper encouraged students to comprehend research and scholarly activities as a form of advocacy. Andrés discussed the joy and challenges of teaching action research to students, as they could easily forget about cultural considerations, sensitivity in questioning, and using concise and well-defined language. As he shared,

Push students to really think about it without just giving them the answer. Yeah, I think research is this beautiful mix of science and art, where you have to be really intentional

about constructing your research design, in a very rigorous, intentional, and sensitive way, yet, at the same time, be flexible, and critical. In your design, and the language you use, and as counselors, the way we approach our participants. And so, I think having my attention on all of these different aspects, is what challenged me so much in this class, and also at the same time, trying to maintain students' enthusiasm and excitement and interest. (Andrés, Rd 1)

Another frequently mentioned objective was to foster critical thinking. As the Divine Miss M said, students will not answer every research question or design a study based on the master's-level research course, but they should "critically evaluate and look for research" and "go through the awkwardness of having to find it in the library and to figure out how to use the keyword search." (The Divine Miss M, Rd 1) She saw students develop from being scared of research articles to having enough confidence and understanding why counseling research was important. She further explained,

I really want them to have the ability to read a recent research article and know if it's valid or not... Not just skip over them that they read the conclusions and can check to see like, were the appropriate things done to make sure that this is reliable. Is it like something that we should question and more research needs to be done? Or is this like, hasn't met the best practices? And is this something that we can say like, Alright, I'm going to share this with my clients, because otherwise, we have that potential to harm... My goal in the course is, of course, all that information... How do you read a research article? How is the structure done? What things are you looking for? What makes it good or not good... They know where to go when they need to research something especially like, culture. Is it appropriate for my client? Is it normed on a population?... I want the

students to like, understand how important that is, and that it's all right there if it's good work. And to reject it completely, if it isn't good work... Just because it got published doesn't make it a good article. (The Divine Miss M, Rd 1)

Although Piper and Winifred Sanderson mentioned facilitating the researcher and scholar identities among students, other participants put a heavier emphasis on guiding students to become the consumer, instead of the producer of research.

Navigating Larger Systems

Although the participants focused their narratives on their direct teaching experiences in the master's-level research course, some of them talked about their interactions with larger systems as part of their teaching experiences. These larger systems include the institutional culture and program traditions, professional standards and the job market, and the sociopolitical environment.

For example, the course sequence and the role of the research course in the students' programs of study impacts the course format and content significantly, which in turn directly influence the teaching experiences of the instructor. The Divine Miss M mentioned that her first department defined the research course as a "gatekeeping course" that students took early in their programs of study; whereas Natalie explained the research course in her department required each student to conduct a research project and a capstone defense right before their graduation.

Another impacting factor is institutional traditions of mentorship and teaching support. Andrés expressed his appreciation for receiving feedback from his current colleagues, which was not feasible in his first institution. As he recounted, in his institution, he felt supported by his department and had a good relationship with his colleagues in general, but he did not receive as much mentorship and feedback as in his current program. He attributed it to the structure of the

institution because faculty were expected to publish a lot at his previous university. “But I notice now that I’m in a smaller university and a smaller program, that I’m getting a lot more feedback from my department, which is nice.” (Andrés, Rd 1)

All seven participants shared positive experiences with the CACREP standards, and some participants recounted how they navigated the key performance indicators in the research course. For example, Molly explained that when she first started her position, the program was in the process of accreditation. She was hesitant to make changes to the curriculum because the faculty had submitted the self-study, and Molly wanted to keep it aligned with the CACREP standards. After the program received accreditation, Molly learned more about the CACREP standards and realized that as long as the assignments were connected to the standards, she could make changes to the course. Thus, she redesigned the course materials and instructional methods, and most of the major assignments remained the same, aligning with the CACREP standards.

A few participants discussed the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on their teaching experiences in the master’s-level research class. Molly mentioned the challenges of teaching the research course online.

For me, it was a lot better in person... I think students ask more questions and feel more comfortable asking questions in person. It’s also especially with research and some of the statistical concepts. I find a lot of use for writing things on the whiteboard. And I tried that. But it’s hard to write on your screen. So yeah, I think I was able to be a lot more flexible when we were in the classroom, because when questions came up, I could write on the board or dropping. So, I think it was a lot more effective in person, because I think students just engaged with the material. (Molly, Rd 1)

Piper emphasized the impact of sociocultural factors on her wellness and self-confidence. She

conveyed very different feelings about teaching the master's-level research course and recognized the changing sociopolitical environment as a big reason.

I love this course... So, I definitely feel joy. Now, if you were to interview me, let's say 2020, it would have probably been apprehension... In 2020, we had social unrest. In addition, there was a lot of uncertainty. You know, think about the beginning of the pandemic. And then when I was in my university, we had different administration... But I think it was honestly the political environment at the time. (Piper, Rd 1)

Other Related Experiences

In discussing the impact of their teaching experiences in the master's-level research course on their development, all seven participants mentioned a stronger sense of professional identities and perceived personal growth, underscoring an increased level of self-confidence.

Most participants shared their previous experiences of receiving research education in a counseling program. Winifred Sanderson and Andrés portrayed their previous research educators as role models, and Piper expressed her gratitude for the support and guidance she received from her mentors. The Divine Miss M reflected on her own learning experiences, which helped clarify her purpose of teaching.

Meanwhile, some participants, especially those who are currently involved in the master's-level research course, expressed a need for a community for research educators in counseling. Molly said she would love to talk with others about choosing a suitable textbook for master's-level students. Winifred Sanderson conveyed a strong interest in a roundtable discussion on effective research education in master's counseling programs. Piper expressed her commitment to building a community as a researcher and research educator for colleagues from minoritized backgrounds.

Interpreting Dialogue

After analyzing the first-round interview data, I scheduled an interpreting dialogue meeting with each participant. Utilizing interpreting dialogue sessions allowed me to maintain congruency with my social constructivist stance. Although similar to member checking, interpreting dialogues differ significantly in philosophical underpinnings and structure (Coe Smith, 2007). These sessions served two main purposes: to provide participants with an opportunity to review and give feedback on my interpretations during the research process and to enhance trustworthiness of this study. I conducted these sessions with the aim of collaboratively reviewing my interpretations and gathering more data from participants for coding, analysis, and further interpretation to inform round-two interview questions. Participants shared their thoughts and feelings on the accuracy and representation of the emerging analyses and interpretations.

As planned, I conducted these sessions on Zoom, and the conversations ranged from 20 to 40 minutes in length. I started each meeting by introducing the idea of interpreting dialogues and clarifying that the data analysis was a working document in which I openly accepted feedback to ensure we were co-constructing the meaning of the participants' lived experiences. Then I shared the screen on Zoom and presented the concept map of my data analysis to the participants, providing space for questions, clarifications, confirmation, or rebuttals. After explaining the emergent themes, I asked three general questions (created prior to the session): Do you feel these themes were congruent with your lived experience? What, if anything, may be missing for you? What, if anything, would you like to add to, remove from, or change in this concept map of the emergent themes?

Once the emergent themes looked accurate to the participant, I invited them to share their thoughts and feelings as they reflected on their accounts and the meaning-making process of

their lived experience. This process-oriented question facilitated the participants' reflexivity and self-awareness, further enriching the interpreting dialogue. By the end of the conversation, I invited each participant to identify an overarching theme of their lived experience of teaching the master's-level research course, as presented in the "Themes Within Specific Cases" section.

The interpreting dialogue sessions revealed general confirmation for the emergent themes. All seven participants articulated verification that the individual concept maps matched their lived experience as a whole.

Feedback on the First-Round Data Analysis

The participants agreed with most of the emergent themes I presented. A couple of participants suggested a few specific changes. For example, during a discussion with Andrés about how the teaching experience had impacted him, he hoped to make the code "the pursuit of meaning and a stronger sense of self" more specific. After exploring and clarifying his perspective and meaning-making, we revised it to "the pursuit of meaning and a stronger sense of self-efficacy and professional identity." Joseph also made a similar modification to the code of "experienced anxiety around teaching the course" by refining it to "experienced anxiety around teaching the course for the first time."

Some participants expanded their narratives and explanations of their lived experiences and meaning-making in the interpreting dialogue. When I was sharing my understanding of Piper's strong sense of her social identities, she said,

Two things stood out to me, one would be that advocacy and self-advocacy. Secondly, is having that deeper commitment to the anti-racism, teaching practice... When we're teaching different paradigms, or philosophical practices, that being inclusive for our students being able to recognize the various different salient identities coming into the

room... Being able to talk about things such as Quan qual, Delphi, yes, action research, amongst other things. So that was like, the biggest thing for me. In even making sure we have BIPOC voices...That was something you know, else is making sure we have that inclusive research environment. (Piper, ID 1)

I acknowledged and honored Piper's emotional state of frustration and sadness while discussing a recent diversity and inclusion incident in her department. With her agreement, I included a new code "ongoing emotional experiences" as part of her sense of social identity. Molly reflected on her unique experiences of navigating the teacher-learner relationship in different courses. She shared,

I had this thought, because I have a lot of students because we serve mostly non-traditional students. So, most of my students have worked in like the helping field has, like bachelor's level counseling type of things. And so, I've noticed in some classes, I feel like there's more challenging from students, because they kind of have this idea of like, I already know this, or I already know how to do this. I was noticing that doesn't really happen with the research class because I think most of them really haven't done research as a job... Sometimes I think like, the fact that there's like, a bigger knowledge gap between my students, almost makes them I don't wanna say respect me more, but like, they perceive me more as the expert. And in a weird way, I feel more confident, because I feel like they're not gonna challenge me, or they're not gonna tell me I'm doing it wrong. (Molly, ID 1)

This narrative of Molly stood out to me because no other participants shared a similar experience. Her distinct perspective not only motivated me but also prompted me to incorporate additional factors into my understanding of the teacher-student dynamic.

Participants' Thoughts and Feelings

All seven participants highlighted their professional development and personal growth in teaching the master's-level research course as junior faculty. As they reflected on their storytelling and meaning-making process of this teaching experience, most of them came to a new realization of their growth. For example, the Divine Miss M said,

I was thinking about... how much more I learned, like, I learned a lot in my graduate program. And then I've learned a lot through teaching, like the ways that students come at different questions and being able to, like, see what the answer is from that perspective that's coming. That I gain competence in knowing that I kind of know the full shape of what I'm teaching. But also in my research, I come across new reasons to research new specific kinds of research. And that process, I think, really goes to that lifelong part of like, once you get the basics like you just keep building on that... That brings confidence.

(The Divine Miss M, ID 1)

Some participants emphasized their interactions and relationships with the students. In particular, Natalie expressed her excited feelings about being a research educator and proud feelings of the students' achievements. Additionally, some participants felt connected when hearing about the similarities across participants.

I appreciate that this is a that there's some commonalities. It's really nice to see that there are other people who are you know, feeling the same way and engaging the same way and realizing that this is the work that needs to be done. So, I feel this nice sense of community. [Two colleagues]and I presented on [the topic of teaching research] so it was like, it was nice. It's nice to see this because as we were teaching that or sharing that at the conference, it was also a lot of frustration, like people frustrated about the class and

I think that that frustration is there, but the enthusiasm is stronger. (Winifred Sanderson, ID 2)

I appreciate the opportunity to hear the participants' stories and witness their meaning-making process. The interpreting dialogues deepened my understanding of the participants' experiences and perspectives and allowed me to embrace my commitment to social constructivism.

Summary

In this chapter, I focus on the first-round interviews completed by participants and the data analysis. The content includes the emerging themes for each participant and the emerging collective themes. In accordance with IPA analysis procedures, this coding process primarily focused on the idiographic approach to analysis and a rich description of each participant's themes with supporting quotes (Smith et al., 2009). Following the analysis of individual themes, I looked for the shared patterns among the participants' themes and compiled cases within themes. The emergent superordinate themes for the initial round of interviews include reflecting on emotional experiences and observed emotionality in the classroom, navigating content knowledge, navigating teaching strategies, navigating the teacher-learner relationship, and identifying purposes of teaching. Participants also shared their experiences with larger systems, including the institutional culture and program traditions, professional standards and the job market, and the sociopolitical environment.

During the interpreting dialogue, I shared my evolving understanding and tentative analysis with the participants and invited them to modify the concept map. In response to their feedback, I worked with the participants to co-create language that fitted better for their lived experiences. The participants also created an overarching theme to summarize the most

momentous aspect of their narratives.

After all the seven interpreting dialogues, I developed the second-round interview questions, aiming to get a clearer picture of each participant's experience of teaching the master's-level research course and take contextual factors into consideration. Second-round interview questions consisted of:

1. What were the critical incidents you experienced related to your teaching experiences in the research course?
2. What stands out for you as you reflect on these critical incidents within your teaching experiences?
3. Are there any cultural and contextual factors that impacted your teaching experiences in the research class? If so, which cultural or contextual factors impacted your teaching experience in which way?
4. Did you experience any gatekeeping issues specifically in teaching the research class? If so, can you tell me more about these issues?

I developed the above questions to deepen the analysis and continue the exploration of the participants' lived experiences. The above section includes rich descriptions of the results following the first-round interviews, and the next section encompasses the final results after the second-round interviews.

CHAPTER IV: FINAL RESULTS

This chapter presents the results following two rounds of interviews, coding, and interpreting dialogues with the participants. In this chapter, I introduce the individual themes with detailed descriptions according to the idiographic focus of IPA (Smith et al., 2009). To better conceptualize and present the participants' experiences and meaning-making, I have created a concept map for each participant's narrative and highlighted the superordinate themes. In this chapter, I provide a detailed description of cases within themes, the collective analysis, and integrate feedback provided by the participants in the interpreting dialogue sessions.

Themes Within Specific Cases

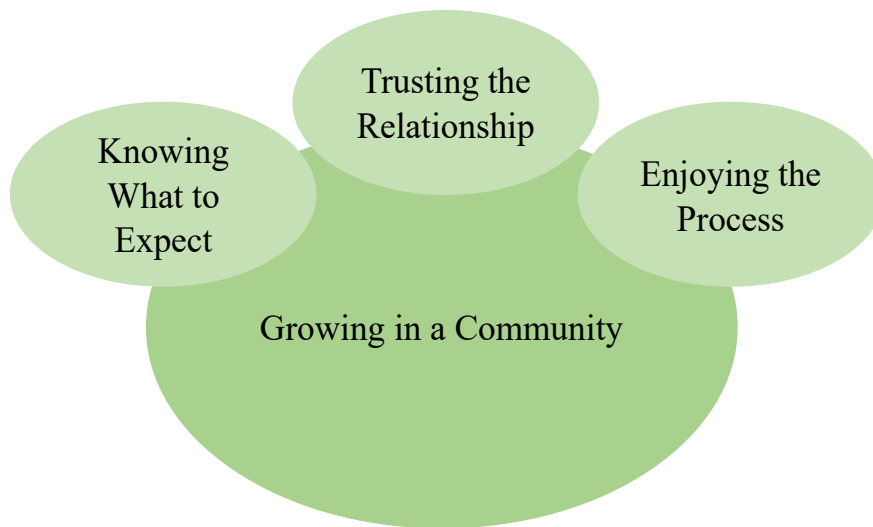
Below are the thematic results for each participant following two rounds of interviews and completing the interpreting dialogues.

Andrés

Andrés identified the theme of his lived experience in teaching the master's-level research course as "Holistic Growth with Students." The superordinate themes include Growing in a Community, Knowing What to Expect, Trusting the Relationship, and Enjoying the Process. See Figure 9 for the concept map and respective themes for Andrés. I placed the "Growing in a Community" theme in the center as Andrés highlighted this aspect multiple times. When exploring the growing process for him, I could see Andrés understand the teaching process more and more, and the realistic expectations helped him gain self-confidence and develop his course design. The "Trusting the Relationship" theme aligns with his appreciation of the community and matches his teaching methods. Listening to his increased passion and sensing the exciting energy in his narratives, I created the theme "Enjoying the Process".

Figure 9

“Holistic Growth with Students” Final Themes for Andrés



Growing in a Community

In my conversations with Andrés, he mentioned community multiple times and underlined his appreciation for the community. He expressed a passion for building communities and making positive changes in the first-round interview. As he shared, he always aimed to “leave a more sustainable impact among communities” and wanted to conduct “research that involves being integrated in the community, spending more time building relationships, and doing things that are more meaningful to me.” (Andrés, Rd 1) He also encourages his students to pursue their passion through research. When reflecting on his lived experiences teaching the master’s-level research course, he shared his observation of a “parallel process” happening in the classroom, where the students were learning and growing. He was also developing his compassion and resilience. Andrés described this process as “parallel growth and development.” (Andrés, Interpreting Dialogue 1) Other than delivering the knowledge, he has created an authentic sense of community in his classroom.

As Andrés discussed, through teaching the master’s-level research course, he became a

more compassionate and flexible person. He also gained an increased awareness of the community and the world in general. “It increases my interest in different phenomena around me in even just a non-academic way. I think it has kept my curiosity alive as a person.” (Andrés, Rd 1) In the learning community he has built with his students, he also got to understand them as holistic individuals by witnessing their struggles and efforts and listening to their voices. He described his teaching as “a very delicate balancing act of pushing students really hard so that they can realize that they’re capable, and developing more self-efficacy in this area... but also not pushing them in such a way where they feel defeated.” (Andrés, Rd 1) Reflecting on the challenges he has perceived in his teaching experience, Andrés said, “The only way to grow and the only way to really self-authorize and learn and grow and develop and become more competent is to do the work.” (Andrés, Interpreting Dialogue 1)

Knowing What to Expect

Andrés has underscored his anxiety, intimidated feelings, and self-doubt when talking about his first experience of teaching the research course. He portrayed the “extreme anxiety” as causing a “brain fog,” and he said he was “not really sure how to discuss the topics, like even though they’re topics that I know.” (Andrés, Rd 2) He also disclosed an internal reaction, “Oh, my gosh, how do I convey this knowledge that I have in a way that’s palatable for master’s students and some students who maybe never had a research class before?” (Andrés, Rd 2)

As he taught the course multiple times, he got used to witnessing students’ nervousness and anxiety and better understood the teaching process. “I’ve let go of that so much anxiety because I realized the students are so much more intimidated than I am by the course material... I know this stuff.” (Andrés, Rd 2) After observing the students’ gradually increased confidence and excitement in the research classroom throughout the semester, he began to feel passionate

about being “a part of that development” and focused more on helping the students “buy into why this is important.” (Andrés, Rd 2)

One of the critical incidents Andrés shared was reviewing the teaching evaluations after his first semester teaching the master’s-level research course. Compared to other classes he was teaching at that time, he had more anxiety about reviewing the evaluations for the research class and was scared of “horrible feedback.” (Andrés, Rd 2) As he shared, the extra anxiety came from his self-doubt and the students’ explicit expression of frustration in the research class. “I’ve had students express explicitly that they are anxious or overwhelmed or that they don’t understand and that’s not the type of feedback that you typically hear in a theories course.” (Andrés, Rd 2) However, after reading students’ comments on his teaching and receiving much more positive feedback than negative ones, he felt relieved and began to believe in his meaningful impact on students as a research educator.

Trusting the Relationship

Aligning with his appreciation for communities, Andrés values the relationship component in his teaching practice. For example, he shifted the home assignment of individual proposals to group proposals. He intended to help students see research as a team effort and create an opportunity for them to experience the interpersonal element of developing a research proposal. As he shared, “Now they’re dealing with opposing opinions and more confusion because there’s more voices involved in the research.” (Andrés, Rd 1) He also meets with these research groups outside of class meetings to provide mentorship and help with project management.

Andrés approaches the teacher-learner relationship with empathy and compassion. He shared a critical incident where a student teared up when struggling with calculating the Z score

in a class exercise. “I remember feeling concerned for the student... I think that for me was, was paramount in that moment, just making sure the student felt like they were being supported and that they knew that to provide extra support if they needed it.” (Andrés, Rd 2) He also encourages students’ self-advocacy and immediate feedback by allowing students to take short breaks as needed. Thus, the student walked away and came back after a few minutes. Andrés also described the student as being supportive of one another and offering encouragement. “I think that was also really helpful. Like after I spoke to the student, other students were, were showing up for her as well. So, it was nice to see the camaraderie.” (Andrés, Rd 2)

Enjoying the Process.

Andrés mentioned his most recent experience teaching the master’s-level research course in the previous semester and described a much stronger excitement than anxiety. “There’s always going to be a healthy amount of anxiety... I think that’s, in part slightly imposter syndrome. But I think also a larger part related to just my desire to do well for the students.” (Andrés, Rd 2) He observed a changed focus in his anxiety. Initially, his anxiety came from self-consciousness and worrying about earning respect from students. “Oh, my gosh, am I going to look, look, I know what I’m doing? Am I going to sound like I know what I’m doing? Are students going to see me as competent?” (Andrés, Rd 2) Over time, he developed more confidence as a research educator and paid more attention to students’ learning outcomes. “How can I help the students more? How can I do this better? Like, what can I how can I teach this in a way that the students? Are you able to learn it more easily?” (Andrés, Rd 2)

Andrés developed a sense of ownership as a research educator. He discussed a unique strategy to “front load the beginning of the semester” by “going over a lot of or putting a lot of stuff in the syllabus.” (Andrés, Rd 2) Meanwhile, he maintains a flexible mindset and is open to

pushing back some of the learning materials. Sometimes he observes students' increased stress after midterm and decreases the workload in the research course to bring students relief. This strategy maximizes students' motivation and learning outcomes. "They feel relieved, they feel more invested learning that material because they see how tough it is." (Andrés, Rd 2)

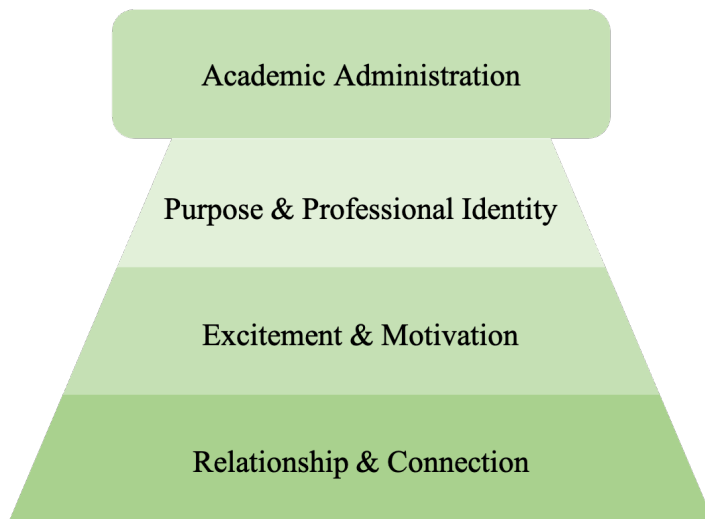
In the interpreting dialogue, Andrés shared his excitement about teaching this research course in the new academic year.

Joseph

Joseph identified the theme of his lived experience in teaching the master's-level research course as "I had to beg for this course as a core faculty!" The superordinate themes include Relationship and Connection, Excitement and Motivation, Purpose and Professional Identity, and Academic Administration. See Figure 10 for the concept map and respective themes for Joseph. Joseph underscored the teacher-learner relationship and the relationship among students as the foundation of the teaching and learning process, and I placed the "Relationship and Connection" at the bottom of the concept map. He also portrayed students' increased "Excitement and Motivation" for the master's-level research course and articulated his passion as a researcher. With enthusiasm and motivation, Joseph achieved the course objectives and further fulfilled his proposes of teaching by facilitating students' professional identity as counselors. However, in his first-round interview, he said he would not teach the master's-level research course again due to administrative decisions. Thus, I position the "Academic Administration" theme at the top of the concept map to visualize its impact on Joseph's experiences.

Figure 10

“I had to beg for this course as a core faculty!” Final Themes for Joseph



Relationship and Connection

Joseph always starts the first week of a master's-level research course by validating the students' authentic feelings about the course. When he had the opportunity to teach the class synchronously, his first teaching intervention was to ask the students, “How many of y'all don't really want to take research?” (Joseph, Rd 1) From his observation, the majority of the students raised their hands in responding to the question. Then he followed up with these students about why they did not want to take a research course and expressed genuine empathy. Meanwhile, he encourages other students to share their thoughts and feelings about the research course to learn about their perspectives. “I'll ask people who want to do research, can you all fight? Can we have a debate? And we get a really lively discussion.” (Joseph, Rd 1)

Similar to Andrés, Joseph also regards research as a team effort and utilizes the group research project assignment as a strategy to facilitate students' learning. “We used to have, we have 12 in the class and we used to have 12 different papers and 12 different research. So now we make into groups of three or four that's three or four groups.” (Joseph, Rd 1) And he spent

time meeting with each group outside of class time to discuss their proposals. Other than assisting the students in narrowing down their research questions to make the projects feasible and interesting, Joseph also provided encouragement and emotional support.

Excitement and Motivation

Joseph's excitement about conducting research and teaching the research course showed up multiple times in his narrative. "As hard as it was, I love teaching the class because I get ideas from students... I get a chance to really talk about that with them, particularly in class... That was the exciting part, the brilliance of the students." (Joseph, Rd 1) Joseph portrayed a critical incident in his teaching experience as "when they realize that, oh, my gosh, research isn't horrible. I can do this." (Joseph, Rd 2)

To empower the students as researchers and facilitate their excitement about research, Joseph approached the master's-level research course flexibly. When taking over the course from his colleague, he canceled some "specific parameters" and revised some previous requirements for the research project assignment, "Let's just not use that. Do what you're passionate about, as long as it's about counseling." (Joseph, Rd 2) He observed significantly increased motivation and interest among the students when they perceived more autonomy regarding their group project. And the increased passion and confidence led to more active communication and participation in the classroom. "Hey, give me an elevator speech on what you're doing. Boom! Here's what I'm doing. Here's why it was awesome... They really, really love what they're doing. You can see the passion there." (Joseph, Rd 2) As the students shared their excitement as emerging researchers, Joseph experienced the joy of being an educator.

Purpose and Professional Identity

Joseph underscored "evidence-based practice" in his conversations with me. He regards

evidence-based counseling practice as part of his counselor professional identity. He also made an effort to teach his students to use research to back up their counseling interventions, “I tell them, everything you do, either as a mental health or a school counselor has to be evidence-based. You can’t just make something up. It’s not evidence-based, we can’t do it.” (Joseph, Rd 1) Further, he explained that when he first started to take over a new class with an unfamiliar curriculum, the primary goal was typically to successfully teach the material. However, as he has taught research over a longer period of time, his goal has shifted to cultivating a habit of actively seeking out research among his students. In his words, “We want to teach them to do research, obviously. But we want to really teach the master’s students to use research.” (Joseph, Rd 2) He also explained the intention of the group research project assignments. When the students chose a research topic that attracted their interest, they would read research articles to support their rationale for the proposed project. In this way, he aimed to foster the students’ habit of consuming research and reading peer-reviewed journal articles as counselors (Joseph, Rd 2).

Academic Administration

In the first-round interpreting dialogue with Joseph, he identified the theme of his lived experience in teaching the master’s-level research course as “I had to beg for this course as a core faculty!” (Joseph, Interpreting Dialogue 1) As Joseph shared, his first experience teaching the master’s-level research course was as a doctoral-level adjunct faculty for another CACREP-accredited program. He initially agreed to teach research as he wanted to gain some college teaching experience. At that time, he noticed that some institutions tended to assign the research course to adjunct professors.

After graduating and getting hired by his current online program, his only opportunity was to lead a trip where he could teach the research course on the trip. “So, I requested to teach

research class as a semester, a term, before that, so I knew it was in it. ”(Joseph, Rd 1) In our later communication, he referred to the request as “begging” for the course. He also pointed out he probably would never teach the master’s-level research course again at his current institution “because it’s not a class that they need their core faculty to teach.” (Joseph, Rd 1) He restated his observation that a lot of institutions had adjunct faculty to teach and further explained,

Because of FTE numbers, I mean, you really need to use your core faculty teaching core classes. So, I need to either be teaching mental health counseling, or school counseling...

If I teach a research class, it hurts our FTE because somebody else can’t teach something else. (Joseph, Rd 1)

Joseph highlighted his passion as a researcher and a research educator, and he clarified not teaching the research course anymore was an administrative decision of his department.

Meanwhile, he expressed an understanding of the decision and chose to “not say anything about it.” (Joseph, Rd 1)

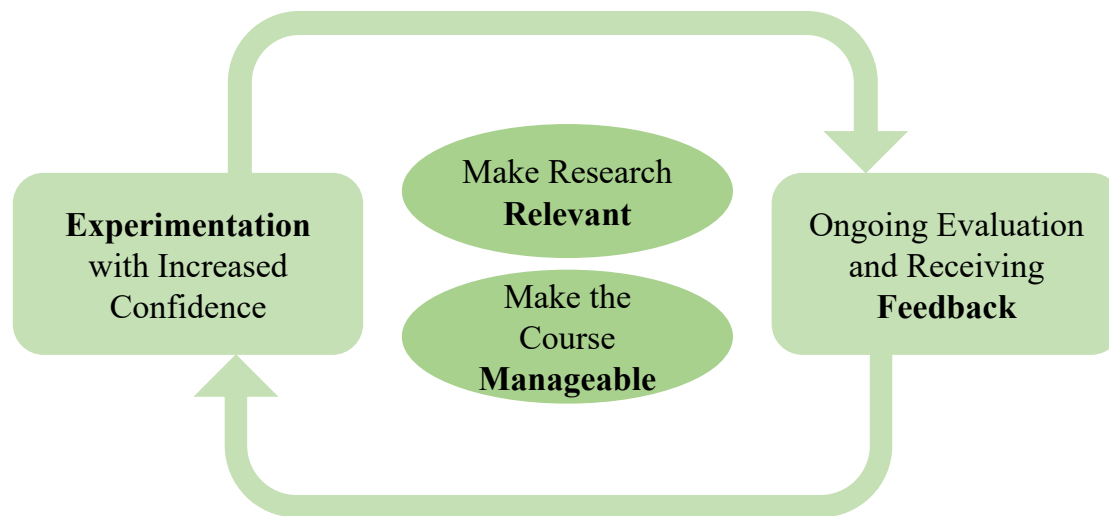
Molly

Molly identified the theme of her lived experience in teaching the master’s-level research course as “Grow in an Adventurous Journey.” The superordinate themes of Molly’s narrative include Make Research Manageable, Make Research Relevant, Ongoing Evaluation and Receiving Feedback, and Experimentation with Increased Confidence. See Figure 11 for the concept map and respective themes for Molly. In both rounds of interviews, Molly discussed multiple new ideas and initiatives of how she planned to teach the master’s-level research course differently. I observed her confidence and excitement about these experiments and developed the “Experimentation with Increased Confidence” theme. She also described students’ reactions and feedback to her experimental class activities and teaching methods. These narratives guided me

to create the cyclical structure of the concept map. As Molly made much effort to make the research course relevant to students' counseling practice and make the workload manageable, I placed these two themes in the center of the cyclical structure.

Figure 11

“Grow in an Adventurous Journey” Final Themes for Molly



Make Research Manageable

Molly joined her current institution right after receiving her doctoral degree. Since then, she has been the only instructor for the master's-level research course in the program. In her first teaching experience, she realized “how little students knew about research.” (Molly, Rd 1) Based on her observations and insights, Molly adjusted her approach proactively by changing some learning materials. “Our textbooks were really aimed more at kind of doctoral level research... It's great stuff, but it's a little advanced. And, so, I think I just brought in some more kind of basic level things.” (Molly, Rd 1) As she gained more experience, she developed more realistic expectations of the students' backgrounds in research and met them where they were.

In the second-round interview, Molly mentioned a recent critical incident, when a former student came up to her and shared their perceptions of her research course. “She told me that she

had been talking to some of the new students in the program, and telling them about her experience in the research class... it wasn't scary, and that it was really manageable." (Molly, Rd 2) Molly said the feedback from students meant a lot to her because making research less intimidating and more manageable has always been her goal. She felt validated at the moment and looked forward to a changing culture of how people perceive the research course in her department.

Make Research Relevant

Molly shared her insight that "research in itself had kind of its own stigma or its own anxiety." (Molly, Rd 1) She saw students come into the classroom with anxiety and a lack of motivation. Then, she gave a few examples of students' negative presumptions about the course, "Oh, research is going to be a hard class. I've heard that this class is hard. I'm not going to like this class. It's going to be a lot of math." (Molly, Rd 1) And she noticed the pattern that "outside of kind of higher ed and academia, counselors really aren't doing research." (Molly, Rd 1)

As an instructor of the research course for CITs, Molly challenged herself to help make research fun and relatable. She acknowledged that the research course was "a bit different from the other courses" because it was "less skilled-focused" and "more knowledge- and content-based," but she also told students, "It's really not about sitting and doing math... It's related to counseling." (Molly, Rd 1) One of her teaching strategies was to bring a content theme related to counseling each week to the research class regardless of the research concept. For example, one of the content themes she used was working with clients who experienced paranormal experiences. She assigned research articles on this topic for students to read, and they developed potential studies on this topic in class. Molly intended to "give things a little bit of applicability, not just to make up random things that don't go together." (Molly, Rd 2) Molly also shared that

some Native American students came to her after class to express their appreciation for her chosen topic as they felt their unique culture was being seen and respected rather than being pathologized.

In our second-round interview, Molly discussed the similarities between qualitative research and counseling practice, noting that both involve collaboration, conversation, and intentional decision-making. Thus, she utilized these connections to create buy-in for students who might feel intimidated by research, “not every research has to be an experiment, or has to be a survey, like talking to people, which is what I do naturally, as a counselor. Those are skills I can use for research.” (Molly Rd 2)

Further, Molly found that students tended to enjoy the class more and participate more actively when she shared her lived experience of conducting research.

I was working on a research project with some colleagues. And honestly, we did a bad job... It then made our lives very challenging... And the data that we gathered wasn't exactly what we needed in the form that we needed to then answer our questions. So that was something I think that was good to be able to share with my students as it was happening to be able to say like here, you can look at this data that we're using and like, you can see where we have not done a great job. So, I think that transparency is important to be able to relate it to like, here's real research that we're doing. Like here, you can look at this real data that I have, you can help me code these qualitative responses... They appreciate it. They'll laugh at me when I'm, you know, talk about the mistakes that we've made. (Molly, Rd 2)

By sharing her mistakes in conducting research and being transparent as an instructor, she has made research relatable and made herself approachable to the students.

Ongoing Evaluation and Receiving Feedback

Integrating students' feedback was an apparent theme in Molly's narrative. As mentioned above, Molly received students' feedback that the learning materials were overwhelming when she was teaching the master's-level research course for the first time. Thus, she navigated different textbooks and modified the curriculum. Moreover, she has employed various methods to evaluate students' learning outcomes and developmental stages. For instance, she gave students two quizzes to consolidate their understanding of the content knowledge, and some students struggled with the first one. Thus, she did a Kahoot Game with the class before their second quiz and noticed a significant improvement in one of the students.

Molly identified assigning the quiz as a "learning experience" for her and shared her inner process in making meaning of her students' quiz scores, "Am I not explaining things well enough? Do I have some students that maybe you just are not great test takers? Or what do I need to do to make sure that, kind of, everyone's on the same page?" (Molly, Rd 2) After reflecting on students' feedback and analyzing their performance on the quizzes, she identified the gaps in students' learning and identified students needing more support. To support students' autonomy and allow them space for emotional coping, she provided students with options of receiving their scores immediately in class or via email afterward. After identifying the students who struggled most, Molly made appointments to meet with them outside of class. She aimed to give them some reassurance, provide support as needed, and allow other opportunities for them to make up points and pass the class. In this way, she integrated the informal gatekeeping and remediation process into her teaching practice.

Experimentation with Increased Confidence

Molly started her journey as a full-time faculty amid the COVID-19 pandemic. As a new

faculty not prepared for online teaching, she identified “anxiety” as the dominant emotion in her first experience teaching the master’s-level research course. At that time, she perceived much autonomy as an instructor and received much trust from her department. She also observed a lack of passion for teaching the research course among her colleagues. She shared an “awkward” feeling and “apprehension” when she modified the curriculum because the course was previously split between two colleagues, and she didn’t want them to perceive her modifications as criticism, “There’s always that apprehension of, you know, you don’t want them to think that what they were doing wasn’t good, or it wasn’t working.” (Molly, Rd 2)

After several years of working with her colleagues, Molly reflected on her apprehension at that time and expressed feeling much more confident in making changes and enjoying her ownership as the instructor. When being asked about her previous concerns about navigating the faculty dynamics, she said, “Honestly, I think it was all in my head... Knowing them now, they didn’t care if I change anything or everything. They really were happy to let me take it and go.” (Molly, Rd 2) She recognized a constant cyclical process of trying something new and seeing if it works in her experiences teaching the master’s-level research course for multiple years.

Sometimes, I feel like, oh, I can’t wait until the course is just the way I want it, and I can leave it like that. But I don’t know. I think when that happens you also stop growing. So, I don’t know. I think that cycle is always really important to just keep things fresh.

(Molly, Interpreting Dialogue 2)

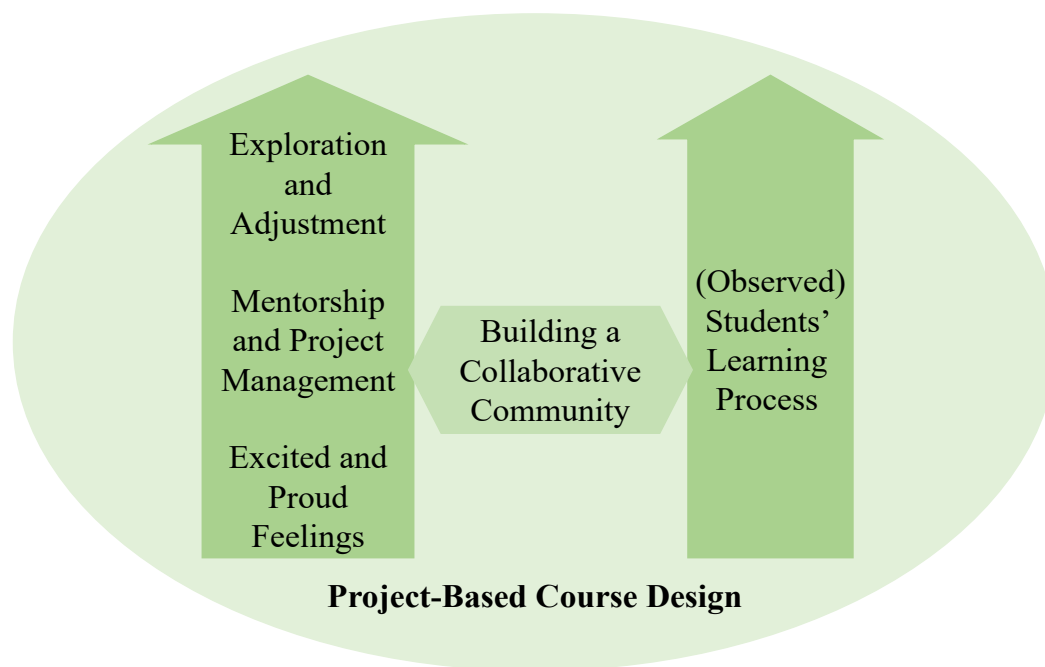
When discussing her plan for teaching the course in the new semester, she considered restructuring the quizzes for students and integrating the creative research methods into the curriculum.

Natalie

Natalie identified the theme of her lived experience in teaching the master's-level research course as "Exploring the Uncertainty Together." The superordinate themes include Project-Based Course Design, Building a Collaborative Community, Exploration and Adjustment, Mentorship and Project Management, Excited and Proud Feelings, and Observed Students' Learning Process. See Figure 12 for the concept map and respective themes for Natalie. The "Project-Based Course Design" made a remarkable difference in multiple aspects of Natalie's teaching experiences, so I visualized this theme as the background of her concept map. Because of this unique course design, Natalie's work included a lot of "Mentorship and Project Management," and she described her main emotions as "Excitement and Proud Feelings" when witnessing students' growth. As Natalie shared in the interviews, she was a third-year tenure-track assistant professor but was in her first year after joining her current program. Thus, she was exploring and adjusting to a new environment when teaching the master's-level research course. Her "Exploration and Adjustment" parallel with her students' learning, and she facilitated collective learning by "Building a Collaborative Community."

Figure 12

“Exploring the Uncertainty Together” Final Themes for Natalie



Project-Based Course Design

As Natalie shared in the first-round interview, her program guides faculty to deliver the research course distinctly. It requires students to complete a client-centered outcome research project either individually or in a small group. The research courses are divided into two semesters, each consisting of one and a half credits. During the fall semester, the students work on formulating a research proposal that they will implement in the spring at their field sites. This process involves learning about the different terminologies related to research and applying them to a real-life study that they will conduct. Natalie enjoyed being a school counseling research educator and felt proud to witness the students' learning and growth. She expressed an appreciation for this project-based course design, "It's just interesting that this class can be made applicational in a way so that they're walking away with the practical experience of it." (Natalie, Rd 1)

Due to the project-based nature of the master's-level research course, the department intentionally kept the class size small to approximately ten students. As Natalie shared, each full-time faculty member in the school counseling program teaches the research course. In her class, she taught 11 students who collaborated on nine projects altogether. Additionally, there were two other sections of a similar size taught by her colleagues. The faculty members teach the same section in the fall and spring, allowing them to provide continuous guidance throughout the year. Natalie and her colleagues sometimes merged classes as "mini information sessions" to strategically cover general topics applicable to all students, such as writing a literature review and the IRB approval process (Natalie, Rd 1).

Building a Collaborative Community

Natalie appreciated the collaboration with her colleagues since they had different areas of expertise and could serve as a consultant on different methods. In her words, "It's like leveraging the kinds of expertise that we bring in as faculty as well." (Natalie, Rd 1) As a new faculty member in her current department, she felt supported, "My department has been super responsive and supportive. And then they're also open to the ideas that I bring to the table too." (Natalie, Rd 1) She then mentioned more details of the support she received. As a new professor, sometimes she did not have the answer to students' questions regarding the department's policies, and she always felt comfortable seeking help from her colleagues. She also identified gaps based on observing students' learning processes and suggested new teaching methods. For example, in the fall semester, she had the initiative to invite guest speakers. Thus, they had a guest speaker from the writing center to discuss how to write a literature review and a librarian speak on how to use library databases for research.

Natalie approached the master's-level research course as a collaborator and a mentor. Her

teaching philosophy includes open communication of expectations. At the beginning of the semester, she set deadlines as a guide for students to manage their projects. Then she shared,

This is something I do usually the first day of class for any class I teach, I do ask them about class norms, and what at what kinds of expectations they have for me as an instructor, what kinds of expectations they want from their peers, because of the nature of the classes. (Natalie, Rd 1)

To her, discussing mutual expectations and class norms fosters a sense of community, where students can share their thoughts and feelings openly and learn from each other.

As the students moved forward in their research process, Natalie encouraged them to exchange feedback and support each other. She further explained with an example, students worked on their research questions during class time and between classes. During the next class meeting, students focused on providing each other with feedback on their progress. She referred to this teaching strategy as “interactive work during the class.” (Natalie, Rd 2)

Exploration and Adjustment

As mentioned above, Natalie was a new faculty member in her department, teaching the master’s-level research course for the first time when she participated in my study. An important part of her adjustment into the research educator’s role was trying to make the workload manageable for the students and herself. Other than creating a planned timeline, she employed the small group discussion as a strategy to maximize the efficiency of the class. After implementing a peer writing workshop, she divided the students into small groups and had them read each other’s proposals and IRB documents. She provided a structured format for feedback where each group discussed one project for 15 minutes, focusing on the strengths and areas for improvement. There was a rotation so each project was discussed in a group. Natalie found this

group learning strategy helpful as every student participated and learned from each other. She aimed to work smart with limited time and the diversity of projects her students had.

Reflecting on her exploration and adjustment to the new university, Natalie shared a challenging situation where her students received feedback from the IRB committee. The original instructions were clear, but she and her students received mixed information from reviewers about what aspects of the documents needed to be improved. Natalie cites an example of a reviewer giving opposite instructions from a previous reviewer. “The IRB is at my at this current institution was just a little bit of a different process than I was expecting...very much copy-editing focus rather than at ethical focus.” (Natalie, Rd 2)

Mentorship and Project Management

Natalie spent much time mentoring her students and helping them with project management as they moved through the research process. When discussing the unexpected feedback regarding their IRB documents, Natalie mentioned the frustration among her students and herself. “They were annoyed... It was more than they were annoyed by the process, as was I. And so, I was very transparent about how annoyed I was, as well, but we just have to get through it together.” (Natalie, Rd 2) Since the students had to work on their projects during the winter break to respond to the emails from the IRB, Natalie also made herself available during the break as a coach and a consultant. “I literally like sat on Zoom with them, like screen shared. They were screen sharing with me, I was telling them, like write this thing, write the sentence exactly down so that the IRB knows you did that.” (Natalie, Rd 2)

Throughout her teaching experience during the academic year, Natalie often noticed students’ overwhelmed feelings. She tried to check in with them, listen to their inner experiences, and validate their feelings with genuine empathy and appropriate boundaries. She

told her students, “Ultimately, you’re gonna have to do this work... I’m going to be here with you every step along the way to give you feedback to help alleviate any stress to provide clarifications, answer your questions.” (Natalie, Rd 1) She recognized attending to students’ emotional experiences and offering encouragement as part of her mentorship practice.

Excited and Proud Feelings

Despite the challenges she has encountered, Natalie portrayed teaching the master’s-level research course as “a really cool experience” without hesitation (Natalie, Rd 1). She highlighted the excited and proud feelings she had experienced in the class. In the first-round interview, I asked what stood out most to her in teaching this course, and she shared how much she liked the students’ project topics because these topics were “unique to what they’re interested in, it’s unique to their school settings as well.” (Natalie, Rd 1) She then provided a few examples of students’ enthusiasm and thoughtfulness. A pair of students were researching the experiences of newcomer students transitioning into a public high school while accommodating their need for Spanish-language interviews. Some other students looked at topics like student-athlete mental health and creating developmentally appropriate classroom lessons for elementary students.

Natalie also shared a critical incident when the students presented their literature reviews and proposal research methods briefly at the end of the fall semester. “It was very clear that, that everyone was just like, really excited for each other and impressed because I think they were so in their own worlds with their own projects... And then they're just celebrating each other.” (Natalie, Rd 2) Natalie identified this moment as critical because she intensely experienced the proud and excited feelings as a counselor educator.

Observed Students’ Learning Process

In our interviews about her teaching experiences, Natalie shared many observations of

her students' learning process, such as participating in small group discussions, navigating the IRB approval process for the first time, and presenting their research proposals. She identified the overarching theme of her experience as "Exploring the Uncertainty Together." As she explained, conducting a research project inevitably involves dealing with uncertainty, and she felt grateful to go through this journey with her students. She expanded her areas of expertise as a researcher in this exploration. "They're all exploring different kinds of topics, I also get to explore those topics with them... Then I kind of become a nerd with them." (Natalie, Rd 1)

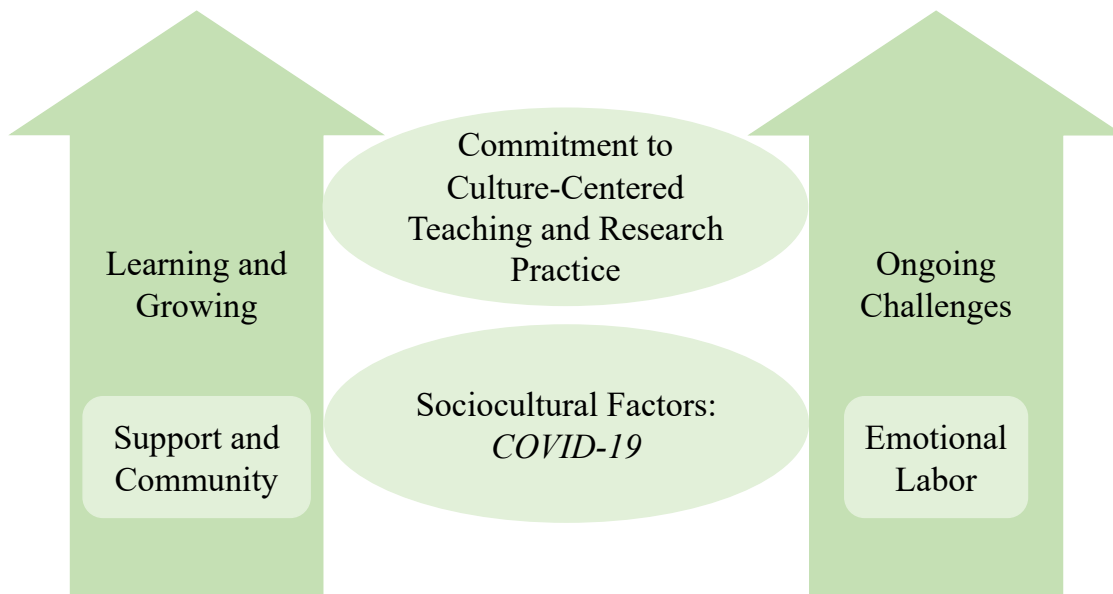
Piper

Piper identified the theme of her lived experience teaching the master's-level research course as "Advocate for an Inclusive Research Learning Environment." The superordinate themes include Commitment to Culture-Centered Teaching and Research Practice, Learning and Growing, Ongoing Challenges, and Sociocultural Factors. See Figure 13 for the concept map and respective themes for Piper. In our conversations, Piper shared her learning process as a research educator and conveyed a strong motivation to grow. She underlined the support from her communities in her "Learning and Growing." However, she also told me about the "Ongoing Challenges" she encountered in her teaching experiences and emphasized the "Emotional Labor" related to handling the challenges. I utilized parallel lines to demonstrate the "Learning and Growing" theme and "Ongoing Challenges" theme. As Piper analyzed these difficulties by exploring specific critical incidents, she recognized her "Commitment to Culture-Centered Teaching and Research Practice" as a significant factor because the difficulties often came with pushback against her teaching philosophy. Despite the struggles, her deep commitment motivated her to continue to learn and grow. Meanwhile, Piper mentioned multiple sociocultural factors that impacted her experiences. For example, the COVID-19 pandemic brought her a lot of

pain and reminded her of the support from her community. Thus, I placed the “Commitment to Culture-Centered Teaching and Research Practice” theme and the “Sociocultural Factors” theme between the two parallel lines in the concept map.

Figure 13

“Advocate for an Inclusive Research Learning Environment” Final Themes for Piper



Commitment to Culture-Centered Teaching and Research Practice

Piper stepped into her role as a full-time counselor educator with a robust sense of self as a researcher. “I absolutely love research. I love qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods... When I was hired... I had been involved in several different professional organizations that focused on mentoring researchers.” (Piper, Rd 1) As a researcher, she expressed an appreciation for the “anti-racist lens” and “critical research methodologies.” (Piper, Rd 1) She was also eager to build a community as a researcher and research educator for colleagues from minoritized backgrounds. Reflecting on her teaching experiences in the master’s-level research course, she said two things stood out to her most. “Two things, one would be that advocacy and self-advocacy. Secondly, is having that deeper commitment to the anti-racism teaching practice.”

(Piper, Interpreting Dialogue 1) She further explained her commitment to culture-centered anti-racist teaching practice in the research course as “teaching different paradigms or philosophical practices and being inclusive for our students being able to recognize the various different salient identities coming into the room.” (Piper, Interpreting Dialogue 1)

As she integrated “critical ideological paradigms” into her classes and taught “post-colonial or indigenous paradigms,” she observed students having “varied” reactions (Piper, Rd 1). Some students reached out to collaborate and research with her, and she co-presented with them at conferences. However, some other students pushed back on the amount of reading required for the course, and they regarded some articles on anti-racist counseling practice to be “inflammatory.” During the class discussion, Piper observed some students’ lack of openness to qualitative research and lack of understanding of the author’s positionality. “It was just a matter of wanting that student to be able to think about beyond reliability, validity and rigor, because the student’s question was about the amount of rigor with this particular article.” Thus, Piper slowed down and explained the “philosophical drives” and “qualitative research traditions” to meet the students where they were (Piper, Rd 1). Reflecting on the pushbacks and some students’ reactions to different research paradigms, Piper said, “I had to think about how the power of research can be as a change agent...” (Piper, Rd 1) She also challenged herself to take students’ development stage into account and conceptualize the learning outcomes more comprehensively.

Learning and Growing

In our conversations, Piper shared her learning and growing process as a research educator. She recognizes that her teaching experience in the master’s-level research class has impacted her as a professional and as a person. As she stated, “My experiences in the research class has fueled me to collaborate with more experienced researchers to have the academy, and

then also being able to also collaborate with up and coming researchers to also promote the learning.” (Piper, Rd 1) She has attended webinars on research methods and joined multi-institutional research teams to foster her research work. She also noticed her development as an instructor. “I definitely think about transformation... My teaching pedagogy... I went from being very student-centered to now my pedagogical practice is relational culture... RCT for me, it’s about that connectivity.” (Piper, Rd 1)

Support and Community. In her journey of learning and growing, Piper underscored the support she received from different communities. When discussing some students’ unwillingness to read qualitative research articles and questioning the value of different paradigms, Piper shared, “My affinity group pointed out, it may have also been where the student was at, in their development, and being an early-on researcher, whereas I was just thinking like what the student has done... And that’s when I was wow, oh, my! I’ve missed something.” (Piper 1)

Piper felt grateful for the emotional support she has received from her community. She shared a sensitive experience of receiving students’ teaching evaluations and reading some comments on her hairstyles and clothes. These comments brought much self-doubt and difficult feelings to her, and encouraging messages from her peers helped her go through the challenge. “At that point, I remember I wanted to give that course up. But I remember my colleagues, like you do a lot of great work, and they’re like, you need to look at these other reviews.” (Piper, Rd 1) She also reached out to her mentors to debrief. Piper summarized, “If I have support groups, I’m able to see that I’m not alone in this... For a while, I’m at my institution. I didn’t have anybody that was like, open and talk about it.” (Piper, Rd 1)

Ongoing Challenges

Piper developed confidence in her content knowledge of counseling research. However,

challenges continuously showed up in her experience teaching the master's-level research course. She had to stop a student's final project presentation on creating affirming spaces within the school because "the student started talking about from their religious standpoint regarding LGBTQ population." (Piper, Rd 2) She said, "My stomach was uneasy... I was also concerned about the welfare of the rest of my students." (Piper, Rd 2) After consulting with the department chair and dean, she clarified the rubrics and added a disclaimer to her syllabus.

Piper also shared some other critical incidents in her research class, the majority of which were related to her "using more culturally centered theories." (Piper, Rd 2) She then explained this point by giving me an example. When she assigned a mock qualitative research interview homework to students, a student asked if they could use their first language in the mock interview protocol, which raised concerns from another student who felt it would be unfair. Piper remembered the student's comment as "It's unfair for us, because how are we going to know?" (Piper, Rd 2) Piper facilitated a conversation about multiculturalism and acculturation, and she observed students started crosstalk. At that time, she was unsure if the comment stemmed from ignorance or oppression. Thus, she gave the students a short break and consulted with her supervisor and mentor before addressing the issue. The incident left a lasting impact on Piper and still felt fresh in her memory even after three years. Related to this critical incident, Piper also shared conversations in the program faculty meeting. When she brought up the student's comment in class and advocated for a safer learning environment, she found that a colleague had a strong opinion of not allowing students to complete any assignments in other languages, "Absolutely not, you know, you're in America." (Piper, Rd 2) To Piper, the faculty meeting became even more disturbing than the class discussion. "My face was hot. And I remember my voice. I couldn't make a coherent argument. Because I was more deeply appalled." (Piper, Rd 2)

Emotional Labor. Other than updating her syllabus and developing new teaching strategies, Piper recognized that she had much emotional labor going through these challenges. I invited her to recall her feelings as she shared the critical incidents, and she named multiple emotions, including confused, hurt, sad, vulnerable, disappointed, appalled, disgusted, concerned, frustrated, and ashamed. Although she leans on her community for support and validation, these emotional processes take much time and energy.

When she was questioned by some students and a colleague, she started “registering for every research thing” that she could find online. She added, “It was because I subconsciously believed like maybe I was deficient.” (Piper, Rd 2) Her department chair talked with her and reminded her that she did not have to do so, leading to an aha moment for her, “There was something really wrong. And I was internalizing this, I was internalizing these messages that I would never feel great researcher.” (Piper, Rd 2) With the new self-awareness, Piper chose to work on this internalization issue. She shared,

I had to also think about some of the counter messages... So what I had to do was literally counter these... irrational thoughts, with more positive thoughts, you know, as far as, although I may not be as all the expertise as I desire, I’m still, you know, still make an effort. There’s a lot that I can display. And so that that was the thing, like I didn’t have, I was like, I don’t have to prove anything to anyone else. And that’s what I had to start doing was like I, I started writing affirming messages, like on posters and putting them up on my computer monitor. And I remember I had enrolled in coaching and counseling at that time. (Piper, Rd 2)

Sociocultural Factors

Aligning with her commitment to culture-centered teaching and research practice, Piper

acknowledges the impact of the sociocultural environment on her students, her colleagues, and herself. In the first-round interview, Piper discussed receiving students' teaching evaluations with comments on her hairstyles and clothes. She also mentioned having a colleague a few years ago who perceived her as "being very deficient and weak." (Piper, Rd 1) She said, "I am a black cisgender woman, from the deep South, I would point out, I was socially conditioned, is working class." (Piper, Rd 1) Piper pays attention to these biases as she noted that students often credited a male professor with more knowledge in the research subject because "gender would come into play." (Piper, Rd 1)

The COVID-19 Pandemic. Piper recognized that the COVID-19 Pandemic has significantly affected her teaching experiences. In our first-round interview, she said, "I can definitely tell you, this is a course that I really have enjoyed. I definitely feel joy... If you were to interview me, let's say 2020, it would have probably been apprehension." (Piper, Rd 1) Besides her growth and the development of her institution, she mentioned the social unrest and uncertainty at that time. Later, in our second-round interview, Piper further explored the impact of the pandemic. She mentioned having to tell the students about having everything online and responding to their emotional needs. Piper also discussed various challenges faced by students, such as having to disable chat and turning on cameras for online classes, which caused problems for some students who did not have stable connections or had to live in shelters. Some students had to travel long distances to pick up Wi-Fi devices provided by the university, and the unreliable Wi-Fi connection caused further problems. Other challenges include childcare needs, social isolation, and the lack of natural interaction in online classes, making it easier for quieter students to "hide." Piper also discusses the importance of having conversations about race and politics during the pandemic and encouraging research that looks at other community members

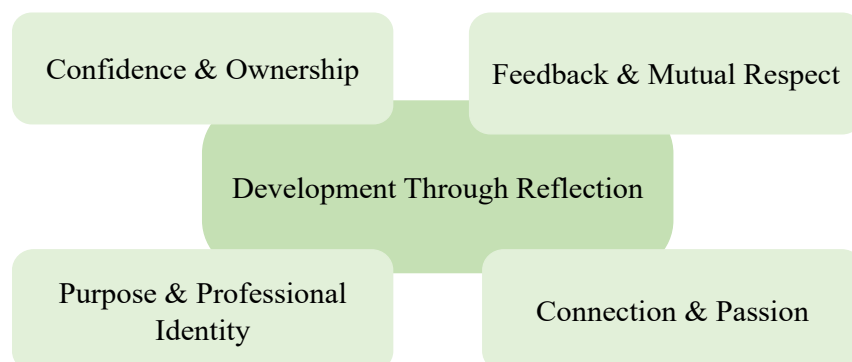
beyond the usual population of counselor educators and students.

The Divine Miss M

The Divine Miss M identified the theme of her lived experience teaching the master's-level research course as "Lifelong Development as a Counseling Research Educator." The superordinate themes include Development through Reflection, Confidence and Ownership, Purpose and Professional Identity, Feedback and Mutual Respect, and Connection and Passion. See Figure 14 for the concept map and respective themes for the Divine Miss M. Self-reflection appeared as a critical component in the Divine Miss M's narrative, leading me to position the "Development through Reflection" theme in the center of her concept map. When discussing her development as a counseling research educator, the Divine Miss M explored four different aspects, including Confidence and Ownership, Purpose and Professional Identity, Feedback and Mutual Respect, and Connection and Passion. I placed these elements around the central element in her concept map.

Figure 14

"Lifelong Development as a Counseling Research Educator" Final Themes for the Divine Miss M



Development through Reflection

The Divine Miss M was not teaching the master's-level research course when I

interviewed her. She shared many pieces of self-reflection she had when she was teaching the class. To the Divine Miss M, these “intentional reflection” pieces made a meaningful part of her professional journey (The Divine Miss M, Rd 2). For example, she discussed her observations about some research educators being capable of teaching but unwilling to update their knowledge of different research methods. She explained, “I feel like I see and recognize the lack of desire to spend more time in that content.” (The Divine Miss M, Rd 1) Sometimes educators got too comfortable with the content knowledge to keep learning. She also named the “secret fear” among educators of being exposed as not understanding the materials and expressed a commitment to “lifelong development” as a researcher and a counselor educator.” (The Divine Miss M, Rd 1)

She also reflected on her experiences with research courses in graduate school, where she initially found the information unusable and disconnected. However, by the end of her research courses, she could see how all the pieces fit together and comprehend how research works in general. “Once you have them all, it like moves like a watch, you know, like their turn and like it's functional.” (The Divine Miss M, Rd 1) She thought that if she had understood that each class was not independently usable from the beginning, she would have had an easier time conceptualizing the material. This reflection piece also informed her teaching practice in the research class. As she wanted students to critique recent research articles, the Divine Miss M believed that students should understand the holistic picture of research methods.

Confidence and Ownership

The Divine Miss M talked about the anxiety and imposter syndrome she experienced as a first-year assistant professor, and she highlighted the learning and growth through her teaching experiences. When she taught the master’s-level research course, she felt confident in her content

knowledge of counseling research but was not experienced in teaching. And she was afraid of getting questions and not knowing how to answer. She further explicated, “I just had some insecurity that I really fully held the concepts in a way that I could teach it to somebody else without leading them down a wrong path.” (The Divine Miss M, Rd 2) She was “thankful” that introducing the syllabus allowed her to build a relationship with students and provided a “soft entry” into the curriculum (The Divine Miss M, Rd 2). She also remembered trying to alleviate students’ anxiety. She indicated, “I’m a big believer in, like, the exchange of emotions and like the mirror neurons... I think I am the more nervous (in) my classes. And that, that sense of like trying to comfort them, but also not being comforted.” (The Divine Miss M, Rd 2).

Exploring Content Knowledge and Curriculum. During the first semester of teaching the master’s-level research course, the Divine Miss M used three textbooks when preparing her lectures because she did not know yet “what information was more important than other information.” (The Divine Miss M, Rd 2) She approached this dilemma by providing the students with all the information and then examining how different sections helped students’ learning. “Now I have more discernment in understanding the content and being more selective, knowing where to focus more, because those are the pieces that they need to build with and where.” (The Divine Miss M, Rd 2)

Navigating New Teaching Strategies. The Divine Miss M took the risk to experiment with different teaching techniques and evaluate the effectiveness of these strategies. “My recollection is experiential activities,” she said. Letting students touch and feel ideas landed better than simply giving the statistical concepts. When she had the opportunity to communicate with a passionate and more seasoned research educator after a few months, she gained insight into the gap between the expert and herself. She shared, “Somebody else figured out how to

communicate as the thing that needed to be communicated. I was able to then put into my own style and my own teaching to make sure that students got that.” (The Divine Miss M, Rd 2) In addition to discovering effective teaching strategies, she also created teaching styles that felt authentic to her.

Feedback and Mutual Respect

The Divine Miss M had an adventure exploring the curriculum and experimenting with various teaching strategies when she was teaching the master’s-level research course for the first time. She leaned on students’ feedback to select learning materials and evaluate the effectiveness of her teaching. To conceptualize her students’ learning process accurately, she tended to ask for feedback, “Like, what do you need more on this, listening to the student evaluations of the course at the end of the semester... It is a big part to me to hear from the students.” (The Divine Miss M, Interpreting Dialogue 2) She also spent time integrating students’ feedback into her teaching practice. In her words, “I feel like when I observe the students connecting with that, I made an intentional choice to keep doing more of that and try to find a way to bring the next lesson into something they can touch and feel.” (The Divine Miss M, Rd 2)

As discussed in the previous chapter, the Divine Miss M encountered challenges in navigating the teacher-learner relationship when she first started.

When it comes to the softer skills, counseling, that students take me a little more seriously... There’s a lot of like, deference to educators in the population that I work with. When it comes to those more concrete, like research and assessment, there’s, there’s almost like the could you possibly know this well enough to teach it to me. (The Divine Miss M, Rd 1)

She recalled a student seeming angry and distant throughout the course. And she mentioned a

“strong memory” of struggling with “the dynamic between the student that didn't want to learn and really questioned whether or not I was old enough or smart enough or capable of teaching their class.” (The Divine Miss M, Rd 1) As a first-year professor, she strived to deliver the content in a digestible way, manage the classroom, provide a good learning experience for as many students as possible, and earn respect from the students. She then noticed her internalization of students’ behaviors and processed her thoughts and feelings. As she reflected, “I internalized so much because I think it really just stepped into my own sense of being, like, just barely not a student. And that transition of grief and loss and all of that.” (The Divine Miss M, Interpreting Dialogue 2)

She also shared a critical incident when a student showed up in her office after receiving a low score on one of the evaluative pieces in the research course, asking her, “How dare you give me this grade?” (The Divine Miss M, Rd 2) She explained to the student that she did not give them the grade, but they earned the grade. Then, she described the situation as “so confusing to me to have that conversation” and identified her feelings at that moment as “shocked” and “defensive.” (The Divine Miss M, Rd 2) She reflected on her learning process to handle similar circumstances. “There’s some competence and knowing that there were right things to say... needing to hold that boundary and to communicate it clearly. Since then, I’ve learned to communicate clearly with gentleness and grace.” (The Divine Miss M, Rd 2)

Purpose and Professional Identity

The Divine Miss M highlighted her purpose of teaching students to critically evaluate recent research articles. She wanted them to be able to understand the structure of a research article, what makes it good or not good, and to be able to check if the research is appropriate for their clients. She also remembered getting ready to answer the question of why CITs had to learn

this research course. “Different from that first class to how I teach now is like I start with, this is why you need it as a counselor, even if you’re not moving forward like I’ve learned to answer those questions.” (The Divine Miss M, Rd 2)

She then shared the “intentional reflection” on her beliefs as a counselor educator and learning to convey her intentions to her students (The Divine Miss M, Rd 2). She acknowledged that the research course can be overwhelming and difficult to understand, but stressed that it was crucial for counselors to have a solid understanding of research in order to provide the best care for their clients. Our profession is still growing and changing, and the Divine Miss M regarded research as the way for counselors and CITs to stay current and make necessary adjustments to counseling practices. As a counselor and a counselor educator, she accentuated evidence-based counseling practice as an essential component of our professional identity. She also encouraged her students to explore best practices for working with clients with marginalized identities. The Divine Miss M discussed the “balance” between “creative applications” and “empirical techniques” and suggested counselors use rigorous research to openly and carefully examine the benefits and risks of non-traditional counseling techniques and modalities (The Divine Miss M, Rd 2).

Connection and Passion

The Divine Miss M shared her experience of receiving mentorship in her first year being a full-time counselor educator. She recounted a critical incident when reaching out for help from her colleagues, and she only received a syllabus and didn’t feel fully supported in addressing her insecurities. Despite her anxiety and the challenges in managing the classroom and navigating the teacher-learner relationship, she managed to figure out effective teaching strategies and the course turned out fine. Yet, she still remembers feeling “so scared and disappointed” at the

moment (The Divine Miss M, Rd 2). I followed up with her about her feelings, and she further explained,

Feeling one that it's a class that nobody wants to teach, which is why they hire people to teach it. And kind of a sense of not knowing what I needed... didn't know how to ask for it... I was embarrassed that I felt like I wasn't, you know, capable of doing the job they hired me to do so a little bit of shame covering there too... It felt like there wasn't somebody who knew it and loved it well enough to care about what makes it work... I guess it was just a paradox of like, okay, I really am in this on my own. Then it turned out, I did have enough resources and enough contacts and enough support and help it just felt like I didn't. (The Divine Miss M, Rd 2)

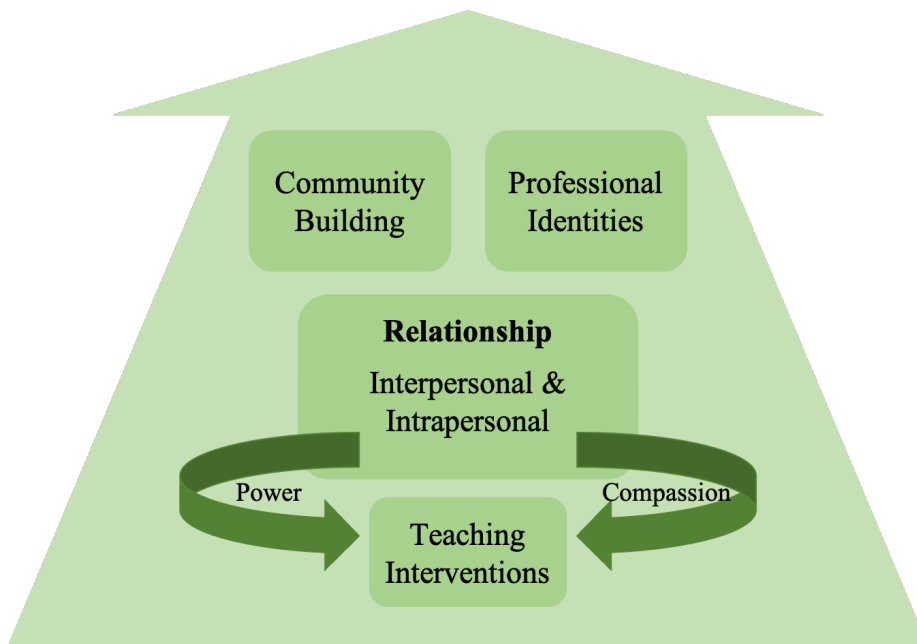
However, later in the semester, she found out that “there was actually somebody on faculty that was passionate about the course and was really helpful” and realized that she did not “know the faculty well enough to know who to talk to.” (The Divine Miss M, Rd 2) She shared a strategy of signing up for university or department service tasks to build a relationship with her colleagues through these common experiences. In one of these opportunities, which she described as “a miracle,” she happened to hear a side comment on faculty expertise and then followed up with a specific colleague (The Divine Miss M, Rd 2). The communication with this colleague changed her mentorship experience “really dramatically.” (The Divine Miss M, Rd 2) She highlighted the mentor's “little bubble of joy” in the conversation and reflected, “Those were the things that I really latched on to, like seeing the excitement of being able to communicate to students in a way that they could understand and like hold on to.” (The Divine Miss M, Rd 2) To her, the excitement in her colleague was even more impactful than the teaching methods they shared.

Winifred Sanderson

Winifred Sanderson identified the theme of their lived experience teaching the master's-level research course as "Scholar-Centered Collaboration." The superordinate themes include Relationship, Teaching Interventions, Professional Identities, and Community Building. See Figure 15 for the concept map and respective themes for Winifred Sanderson. Winifred Sanderson practiced critical pedagogy, and they always attended to "Relationship" components in their teaching experiences. Interpersonally, critical pedagogy required them to scrutinize the "Power" dynamics and attempt to equalize the class. Intrapersonally, Winifred Sanderson practiced and modeled self-care and "Compassion" as a counseling research educator. Such intentions and considerations guided their choices of "Teaching Interventions," as demonstrated by the arrows in the concept map. Furthermore, Winifred Sanderson approached the master's-level research course with the scientist-advocate-practitioner model, and they discussed students developing scholar identities in the research course, leading me to develop the "Professional Identities" theme. As they observed more involvement in the master's-level research course among their colleagues, the "Community Building" theme represents another essential outcome of Winifred Sanderson's effort in teaching the course.

Figure 15

“Scholar-Centered Collaboration” Final Themes for Winifred Sanderson



Relationship

Winifred Sanderson practices contemplative pedagogy and critical pedagogy, and they pay close attention to the teacher-learner relationship in their teaching practices. Winifred Sanderson began to observe their students’ “real trauma” related to math and statistics when a student “stayed after class and cried for 30 minutes.” (Winifred Sanderson, Rd 1) Thus, they started to invite students to her office hours and spend more time with them. The students shared more previous traumatic experiences, such as “being yelled at by statistics instructors at previous universities, or at being the first class they ever got a failing grade in and they weren’t able to get help or support.” (Winifred Sanderson, Rd 1) Winifred Sanderson then reflected, “They would get really emotional... I can tell this was something that hurt them very deeply. And that this class then brought up those insecurities because of that pain.” (Winifred Sanderson, Rd 1)

Winifred Sanderson also conceptualized these reactions with cultural considerations, “the

experiences of our Hispanic and our Asian students in particular, was that they generally had teachers or instructors or faculty who didn't take the time to relate and explore the cultural elements that are also involved inside of research.” (Winifred Sanderson, Rd 1) With a more holistic understanding of the students, they increased the time they spent on contemplative work during the research classes. She started each class with a check-in that focused on stress levels and then selected contemplative practices “based on the need of the class.” (Winifred Sanderson, Rd 1) For example, if the students were at high anxiety, they might do a grounding exercise.

Interpersonal Relationships. As informed by their pedagogical theories, Winifred Sanderson listened to students' voices, attended to their needs, and met them where they were. They shared a critical incident when they were teaching the research course virtually in the spring 2021 semester. The students reported feeling overwhelmed during the check-in, and Winifred Sanderson integrated students' feedback by “slowing down a little bit and doing more group work in between.” (Winifred Sanderson, Rd 2) They recalled, “I ended up getting a feedback about it in my evaluations, that the students were extremely appreciative that I want, took the feedback, and then change the class... They hadn't experienced that before.” (Winifred Sanderson, Rd 2) Winifred Sanderson also shared their conflicted thoughts and feelings since they recognized the necessity of the hierarchy between the faculty and the students yet did not want to sacrifice students' learning experiences or emotional safety for the hierarchy. Specifically, they explored their “insecurity” as a new professor when receiving students' feedback, “I was like, is this our students kind of challenging me in the sense that maybe I don't know what I'm talking about? That wasn't but that's the insecurities that came up.” (Winifred Sanderson, Rd 2)

Witnessing the complexity of their narrative, I slowed down and invited Winifred

Sanderson to portray how they communicated with students in the situation and identify their feelings and thoughts during the process. They identified “insecurities bubbling up” when the students started to give feedback at the beginning of the class, and very soon, they recognized the students’ nervousness about sharing their authentic thoughts and chose to open up the space for their voices (Winifred Sanderson, Rd 2). At that moment, they observed the students’ reactions, “She was like, oh, you’re actually hearing me?... I can tell you what I’m actually feeling!” (Winifred Sanderson, Rd 2) Winifred Sanderson named their own emotional and cognitive processes at that moment,

I was surprised because part of me felt like he should this is just normal, like we should do, like we’ve been taking feedback.... But then I also thought about the fact that they have come straight from undergrad... That makes sense for how education works... I was pretty touched by it... it just felt really nice to hear that kind of immediate feedback that somebody felt heard. I felt surprised, I felt touched. I felt glad that we were able to have the conversation. There was a piece of me, that felt hurt, that they had to have the conversation... I was sad. One that they had to have the conversation at all. And I didn’t catch it. And to that, they had to had that experience where there were not really seen as a human in the education process.” (Winifred Sanderson, Rd 2)

As more students shared similar feelings, Winifred Sanderson proposed possible plans to modify the rest of the class and adjust the workload for the students, such as replacing one of the assignments with a workshop and spending more time on mindfulness activities. As much effort as they made in creating feasible alternative tasks without sacrificing the course objectives, they experienced some uncertainty about the communication process, “A little bit nervous that I wouldn’t be able to find some options. Is this just gonna be like bad Yelp review? Or is this

actually a conversation? ... It turned out to be a conversation, which was great.” (Winifred Sanderson, Rd 2)

Besides intentionally facilitating the teacher-learner relationship, Winifred Sanderson attended to the sense of community in the classroom. Similar to Natalie, Winifred Sanderson also invites students to talk about group norms at the beginning of each semester. They provided a community agreement with 23-25 items and encouraged students to make revisions before signing it. Winifred Sanderson shared a circumstance where two students had a conflict in the class, they handled the situation by asking both students to return to the community agreement. They described this incident as “a really cool lesson” and shared, “I was nervous because I hadn’t done it before. But I always knew that was my plan.”(Winifred Sanderson, Rd 2)

Intrapersonal Relationships. Winifred Sanderson also shared many self-reflective pieces in our interviews. As an instructor, they were mindful of their own emotional processes and mental health needs. For example, they recognized the “emotional labor” of working with students’ anxiety and traumatic responses, “It gets emotionally exhausting to teach the class when you’re engaging as a community... You’re noticing the anxiety and the way that they respond to anxiety... It is a little bit of like agitation that you need to process. That’s a lot of work.” (Winifred Sanderson, Rd 1) With the self-awareness of vacillating between being excited and exhausted by the class, Winifred Sanderson began to schedule rest periods around midterms to take a break from grading and assignments.

Teaching Interventions

Winifred Sanderson incorporated contemplative pedagogy and critical pedagogy to inform their teaching practice. They discussed diverse teaching strategies, including experiential learning activities, contemplative work, the employment of the community agreement, end-of-

semester conference presentations, having guest speakers, and asking students to analyze lyrics as narrative researchers.

Power and Compassion. Winifred Sanderson paid close attention to the power dynamics in the teacher-learner relationship, and they intentionally selected teaching interventions to decrease the power differential. For example, they brought in guest lecturers, who were either about to defend their dissertation or master's-level researchers doing research, to present their scholarly work. They believed the guest speakers' experiences were more relatable to the students and could inspire the students to work on their projects, "I think not just hearing from me was really good because my stories can be unrelatable." (Winifred Sanderson, Rd 2)

Winifred Sanderson demonstrated much compassion and empathy for their students, which led them to always hold a safe space for students and honor the students' opinions. In the abovementioned critical incident when students expressed overwhelmed feelings, Winifred Sanderson approached the challenge by proposing alternative assignments and class activities. They also collaborated with students to continuously evaluate the new plan and maintained an open mindset to modify the class based on students' needs.

Professional Identities

Winifred Sanderson approached the master's-level research course with the scientist-advocate-practitioner model because it aligned with their values and professional identities. In their conversations with me, they naturally referred to the students as "scholars," and they identified the theme of their lived experience teaching the master's-level research course as "Scholar-Centered Collaboration." They changed the research paper assignment from having the instructor grade students' work to a peer-review format. To facilitate the scientist identity among the students, they guided the students to provide constructive feedback and reviewed their peer-

review feedback. They highlighted the importance of critical thinking to the students, “I don’t want you to correct grammar. That’s not what I’m asking you to do... I want you to look at the content, and give feedback on whether conceptually you understand and what the missing pieces are.” (Winifred Sanderson, Rd 1)

When I asked about the cultural and contextual factors in Winifred Sanderson’s teaching experience, they acknowledged their privilege and the power dynamics in the classroom, particularly with regard to students of color and first-generation college students. They also discussed their queer identity in relation to understanding research and how queer identities have been largely ill-researched in the master’s-level research course. When Winifred Sanderson introduced the articles with problematic language to their students, they remained neutral and asked for the students’ opinions to foster the students’ critical thinking as advocates. They explained, “I don’t want them to think that just what I say is correct. I want them to come to their own conclusion.” (Winifred Sanderson, Rd 2) After the open discussion, they encourage the students to reframe the sentences and apply the appropriate language to the peer review assignment.

Community Building

As introduced in the previous chapter, Winifred Sanderson came into their program as the only research educator, “I think the class was kind of neglected. Nobody wanted to teach it. And it’s a risk to teach it with that evaluations piece.” (Winifred Sanderson, Rd 1) They reclaimed and renewed the course through the lens of counseling, shifted the focus of the course to the community, and modified the homework assignments to make the course meet the CACREP Standards. They discussed this change, “Before, people outside of our department would teach educational research; Now it’s only core faculty and sometimes affiliate faculty teaching it... I

mentored new people... There's more succession planning. And that's a big cultural shift."

(Winifred Sanderson, Rd 2)

Besides fostering a sense of community in their program, Winifred Sanderson was passionate about a counseling research educator community. For example, they expressed an interest in having a group interpreting dialogue for this IPA study. In the first-round interpreting dialogue, they shared an experience of presenting on research education in counseling at a conference and mentioned some audiences were struggling with teaching the research course. When I mentioned some common challenges, they said,

It's really nice to see that there are other people who are you know, feeling the same way and engaging the same way and realizing that this is the work that needs to be done. So, I feel this nice sense of community... That frustration is there, but the enthusiasm is stronger. (Winifred Sanderson, Interpreting Dialogue 1)

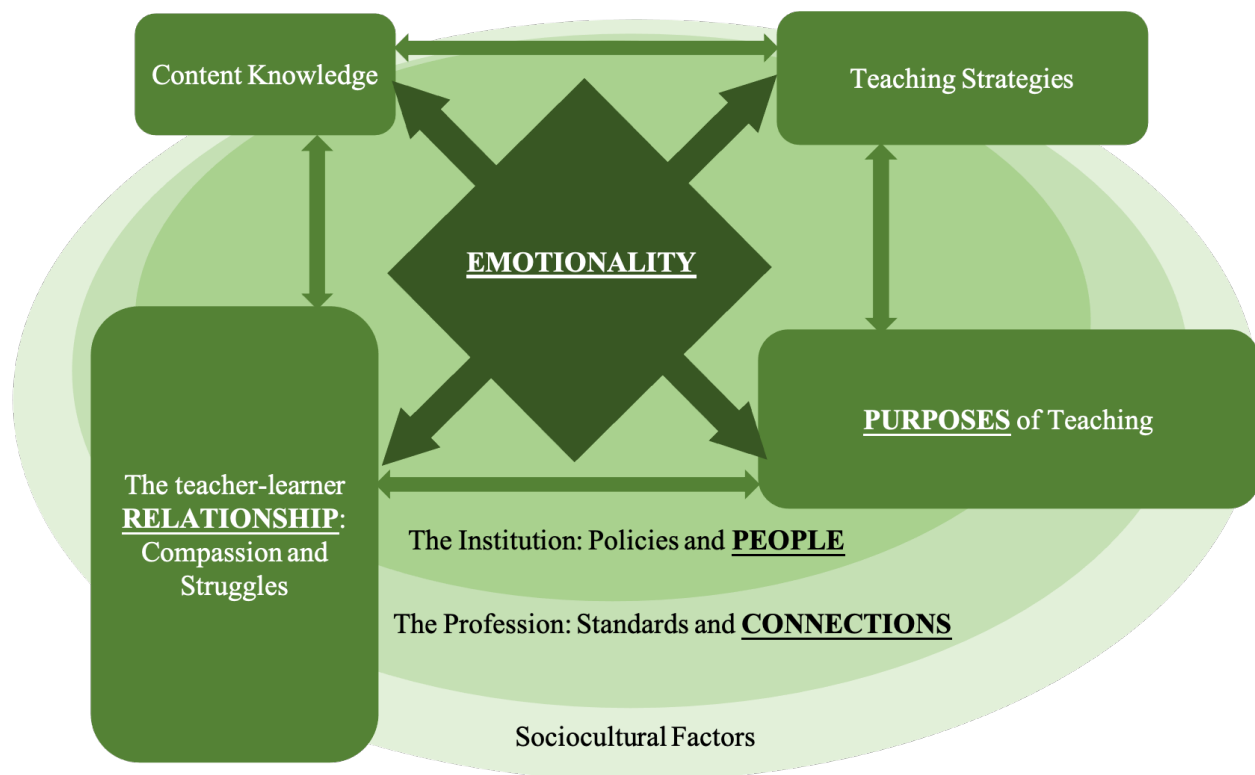
Winifred Sanderson had taught the master's-level research course multiple times and mentored other counselor educators in teaching this course. Many aspects of their narratives demonstrated consistency with other participants, which I explicate in the following section, cases within a theme.

Cases within a Theme

Following the collective analysis guidelines within IPA, this section presents the final cases within a theme. This collective analysis covers all participants' interview narratives and interpreting dialogues. Figure 16 represents the final collective themes and demonstrates the interconnections among these themes.

Figure 16

Collective Themes: Final Themes Across All Seven Participants



The Interconnected Components

Similar to the first-round data analysis, the essential components of the participants' immediate teaching experience include observing and experiencing emotions, navigating content knowledge, mindfully choosing teaching strategies, reflecting on their purposes of teaching, and navigating the teacher-learner relationship. However, as I dove into the critical incidents the participants shared in their second-round interviews, the interconnection among these key elements emerged. In the concept map, I demonstrated the interconnection by adding the arrows.

Emotionality as the Center

As I explained in the previous chapter, the participants' narratives revealed the complex nature of emotionality in the master's-level research course. Besides students' fear and lack of motivation, six participants discussed their insecurity and anxiety. As I explored the participants'

critical incidents in the second-round interviews and made a detailed inquiry into their emotional reactions during these critical incidents, they described more nuanced inner experiences, such as feeling concerned, annoyed, embarrassed, ashamed, appalled, disgust, disappointed, frustrated, hurt, and vulnerable. The participants also portrayed their positive emotions as relief and feeling glad, excited, surprised, proud, and touched.

The participants also discussed the dynamic process of emotionality in their teaching experiences. The emotions were not static in a classroom but could change quickly with ongoing interactions. For example, Andrés observed a student teared up when struggling with calculating the standard deviation. And the student seemed calm soon after taking a short break and receiving support from the instructor and their peers. Similarly, after a student questioned Piper's culture-centered instructional decision, she immediately heard other students' "crosstalk" and perceived "tension" in the classroom (Piper, Rd 2).

Some participants described the mutual impact between the students' emotions and theirs. The Divine Miss M talked about her feelings and observed students' behaviors in her first semester as a professor. She was experiencing inner insecurity. The students' anxiety level was high. She had difficulty regulating emotions and comforting the students in that situation, and she described it as "the exchange of emotions" through "mirror neurons." As explicated in the previous section, Winifred Sanderson had an experience receiving students' feedback and negotiating alternative class plans with their students. They also portrayed the changing emotions of themselves and the students. In several minutes, Winifred Sanderson went through emotions from insecurity about online teaching and nervousness about the suggested alternative assignments to empathy for the students and feeling touched by their appreciation. They observed students' reactions shift from feeling overwhelmed by the workload and nervousness

about giving feedback to feeling surprised by the instructor's listening and willingness to share authentic opinions and vulnerability.

During many of these critical incidents, the participants experienced complicated emotions and simultaneously went through a cognitive process of making instructional decisions. When Piper felt confused about a domestic student's comments on her permission for an international student to conduct a mock qualitative research interview in their native language, she observed the tension in the classroom and chose to give the class a short break so she could solitude and self-regulate. She facilitated a mindfulness activity after the break to manage the class dynamic and help with students' emotional regulation. Winifred Sanderson also described themselves as "in problem-solving mode" when trying to come up with feasible and meaningful alternative assignments. In these cases, the participants attended to the emotions in the classroom and intentionally selected teaching interventions in responding to their students' immediate needs. Consequently, they often observed student feelings shifts, indicating a strengthened teacher-learner relationship.

Emotionality connects the essential components of the participants' teaching experiences by impacting their selections of teaching strategies and learning materials, indicating changes in the teacher-learner relationship, and providing opportunities to revisit their purposes of teaching. For instance, when Molly realized her students felt overwhelmed by the learning materials, she made an instructional decision to explore alternative reading assignments and reflected on her intention to make research relatable and manageable for future counselors. Piper handled difficult feelings after receiving doubt and criticism about her culture-centered instructional decision. Three years later, when she shared the critical incident with me and provided a clear picture of her emotional experiences and observed students' reactions, she believed these

experiences strengthened her purpose of creating an inclusive learning environment for all students and advocating for diverse research paradigms.

The Intensity of Different Components

In my initial data analysis, I regarded the key components (content knowledge, teaching strategies, the teacher-learner relationship, and purposes of teaching) as parallel with each other and at similar levels of intensity. However, when the participants described the critical incidents in detail in the second-round interviews, I attended to how they discussed each experience component in addition to what component they mentioned. Through this lens, the varied intensity levels of different components emerged, and I changed the size of the boxes in the concept map.

More specifically, no participants discussed the content knowledge in depth when talking about the critical incidents. They took the curriculum seriously in their teaching practice and selected learning materials intentionally. Yet, they did not put any of the chosen materials in the center of their narratives. For example, when Piper discussed the assigned article on a critical inquiry, she put a heavier emphasis on her purpose of introducing diverse philosophical stances to students than the content knowledge itself. Likewise, when Molly mentioned her special topics for each week's research class, instead of introducing every selected topic, she demonstrated a teaching strategy to make research relevant and discussed how students from diverse cultural backgrounds connected with different research topics.

In contrast, the participants expressed more thoughts and shared more reflective pieces when discussing their purposes of teaching. They often employ certain teaching strategies to serve their purposes of teaching. For example, Andrés and Joseph both shifted the individual research projects to group assignments because they wanted the students to see what the research

process looked like in the real world. Andrés also fostered critical thinking by allowing the students to deal with “opposing opinions and more confusion.” (Andrés, Rd 1) Winifred Sanderson and Natalie both shared the strategy of inviting guest speakers to the classroom. They also discussed different yet meaningful intentions behind this instructional decision. Natalie aimed to “connect students with resources” so she had a librarian introduce how to use the library database (Natalie, Rd 1). Winifred Sanderson wanted to equalize the learning space and maximize the students’ connections with the research process, for which they invited graduate students to present their scholarly work (Winifred Sanderson, Rd 2).

As presented in Figure 16, the teacher-learner relationship made the most impactful component of the participants’ lived experiences. All seven participants approached the relationship with empathy and compassion. For example, Andrés highlighted that he became more flexible and supportive because of the teaching experiences in this class. Winifred Sanderson discussed their insights into the power differential,

I guess I take it a very existential place. What does it mean that I’m in this space? How do I attack the power dynamics in this space in a way that equalizes not so much that I’m going to be run over, but that our scholars know that I’m never making decisions unilaterally or based on just my own preference, that I’m actually negotiating multiple movable targets, whether it’s accreditation or learning objectives, or syllabus or content for their CPCE or programmatic requirements. They’re all based in the surrounding context. And I’m negotiating them with them. I’m not forcing them to do something I’m asked. I’m saying this is what we have to work with. How do we work in it? So that has been my goal largely, like cultural and context sense is to bring it into the room.

(Winifred Sanderson, Rd 2)

Related to what Winifred Sanderson elucidated, Molly discussed her observations of a unique power dynamic in the research course. Most of her students were non-traditional and had worked as helping professionals, so they tended to have critical thinking in the skilled-focused classes. Yet, Molly has not experienced these challenges in the research class because most students had few experiences with research before. “The fact that there’s like, a bigger knowledge gap between my students, almost makes them, I don’t wanna say respect me more, but like, they perceive me more as the expert.” (Molly, Rd 2)

Yet, some participants struggled with managing the classroom and earning respect from the students as research educators. These challenges are often related to social identities and stereotypes, and microaggression. Piper and the Divine Miss M both discussed their perceived biases. Piper, a Black woman, talked about receiving much lower teaching evaluation scores and more comments on her mannerisms and physical appearance in the master’s-level research course compared to other classes she was teaching during the same semester. The Divine Miss M, a White woman, said she received more respect in the skill-focused class than the more concrete subjects, such as research and assessment, and she believed these differences stemmed from students’ perceptions of her social identities.

The influences of these biases were beyond the teaching evaluations. The Divine Miss M shared the inner process of managing her internalization of students’ reactions, “Why am I internalizing this? How to manage it? It was a very active awareness... The counter side of that is being able to self-regulate and have the awareness so that I don’t project it onto others.” (The Divine Miss M, Rd 2) Piper became depressed and traumatized by the teaching evaluations. She said, “It hit me to the core of my soul... These responses were very emotionally charged... I was in a fog... I just became very self-deprecated... I didn’t even feel like I was fit to work on

anything else afterward.” (Piper, Rd 2) After receiving encouragement from her colleagues and mentors, Piper reevaluated the situation, and she chose to lean on her community and enroll in counseling. As she reflected on the emotional labor and pain, she said, “It’s been three years, it still stings a bit, it just has a different effect. Whereas back then I was pitying myself. Whereas now I’m like I see there’s more people speaking up.” (Piper, Rd 2)

Having the Teaching Experience in a System

I proposed a systemic approach to investigate the participants’ teaching experiences in the previous chapter. These systems include the institutional culture and program traditions, professional standards and the job market, and the sociopolitical environment. Continuing to conceptualize the participants’ narratives from this perspective, I emphasize the importance of social interactions in different systems and elucidate the direct influences of larger systems on individuals’ teaching experiences. In the concept map, I tweaked the language to highlight the social interaction elements in the systems and made the rectangle boxes go beyond the “Institution: Policies and PEOPLE” circle to demonstrate the direct influences of the larger systems.

The Impact of Social Interactions

All seven participants recognized the impact of systemic factors. They expressed their appreciation for the CACREP standards in the first-round interview. Additionally, Natalie introduced the project-based course design and acknowledged the uniqueness of this program tradition. Molly had to teach virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic and discussed the differences between teaching virtual classes and in-person classes. Yet, in the second-round interviews, the participants shared more about specific social interactions in the larger systems and marked some of these as critical incidents.

The Divine Miss M recounted her inner experiences going through the first semester teaching the master's-level research course. As a first-year professor who had just graduated from a doctoral program, she received the syllabus from previous semesters and still felt scared and disappointed. "It's a class that nobody wants to teach, which is why they hire people to teach it... It felt like there wasn't somebody who knew it and loved it well enough to care about what makes it work." (The Divine Miss M, Rd 2) She started her teaching experience with a strong sense of insecurity and did not know how to ask for help. Nevertheless, the situation changed unexpectedly after a few months, "When I did find the right person, I did get a lot of those questions answered, and some excitement... Asking again, after a little bit of time, and asking the right people change that really dramatically for me." (The Divine Miss M, Rd 2) She described the conversation as "talking to somebody who like loves what they do have their little bubble of joy" and accentuated that her memory about "that excitement in the professor" was more vivid than any content of the dialogue (The Divine Miss M, Rd 2).

Piper described the Center for Teaching Excellence at her institution as "absolutely phenomenal." (Piper, Rd 2) When a student questioned her culture-centered teaching style, she came back to the book club group facilitated by the Center for Teaching Excellence. "It was several of us faculty members who were from underrepresented groups... We were able to process this particular experience as a whole in, in our own experiences... We talked about the microaggressions that arose from this particular situation." (Piper, Rd 2) Throughout our interviews and interpreting dialogues, she highlighted the importance of mentorship and community and expressed her commitment to building a community as a researcher and research educator for colleagues from minoritized backgrounds. Correspondingly, Molly and Winifred Sanderson were both interested in roundtable discussions on effective research education in

master's counseling programs.

The Indirect and Direct Impacts

In the initial data analysis, I conceptualized the essential components of the teaching experiences within the classroom or department with the assumption that the sociocultural environment and other larger systems affected the teaching and learning process by impacting the department. Molly reported challenges in teaching the master's-level research course virtually in 2020, and she clarified her intention to join an in-person program. In Molly's case, the COVID-19 pandemic, as a sociocultural factor, directly impacted the university policies and further impacted her teaching experience. Relatedly, Winifred Sanderson discussed renewing and reclaiming the research course to meet the requirement of CACREP and other accreditation bodies. Andrés said he appreciated receiving his colleagues' feedback on his teaching in his current institution, which did not happen when he worked at an R1 university, where faculty were expected to focus more on publishing instead of teaching. These examples indicate the indirect influences of larger systems, such as accreditation bodies and universities, on the participants' teaching experiences.

However, in scrutinizing the contextual factors impacting the participants' teaching experiences, I recognized more direct influences of larger systems, especially the sociocultural environment, on individuals' teaching experiences. Natalie teaches a yearlong project-based research course series where students formulate a research proposal in the fall and implement the project in the spring. Students have much autonomy to choose the "content knowledge" of these two research courses, and Natalie noted, "A lot of their topic they selected because it's a part of their own experiences, or because they're interns at the school, it's a population that they feel very connected to professionally and personally." (Natalie, Rd 2) As she mentored students in

their projects and prepared them for the capstone presentations, Natalie expanded her areas of expertise as a researcher, “So by way of the students’ topics, I’m also learning more about the research out there about the kinds of topics... And they are researching all very different topics across the board.” (Natalie, Rd 1) In Natalie’s case, the students’ cultural backgrounds and the culture at the students’ internship sites directly impacted her navigation of the content knowledge, which is a key element of her teaching experience.

Correspondingly, Molly observed students had stronger connections with the content knowledge when a specific topic spoke to their cultural backgrounds. After discussing the research articles on clients having paranormal experiences, “I have had some Native American students outside of class and talk about how they’ve really appreciated that example.” (Molly, Rd 2) Despite the research course’s reputation for being confusing and boring, some participants selected relatable content knowledge, such as research on marginalized cultural groups and ethical research practice with vulnerable populations, to increase the applicability of the class and facilitate students’ multicultural competence.

On the other hand, as discussed in the previous section, Piper and the Divine Miss M perceived students’ biases and microaggressions in the classroom. These biases and microaggressions created challenges in the instructors’ exploration of the teacher-learned relationship and impacted their teaching experiences significantly. In the interviews, Piper and the Divine Miss M both discussed how the biases stemmed from the stereotypes in the current society and related to their identities. Piper, identifying as a black woman, further clarified her deep commitment to anti-racist teaching practice. She acknowledges the direct influence of the sociocultural environment on her purposes of teaching.

Winifred Sanderson discussed how they modified the class plan and created alternative

assignments for students when they were going through collective trauma during the pandemic. They also shared that they emailed students to offer options for class attendance in 2018 when Trump was re-elected,

However you're feeling about what's going on today, it seems like there's a lot of stress. So, this is my offer. This class is going to be a working class. If you want to bring your stuff in, I will be here and I will walk through it with you. We will talk about we will do peer reviews if you feel like working will help take your mind off things. However, if working is not something you can do right now, I won't be taking attendance... You take the space you need. (Winifred Sanderson, Rd 2)

Since such conditions tended to impact students' mental status and emotional needs, they employed certain teaching interventions to meet the students where they are. These above examples demonstrate how social events and contextual factors may directly influence the participants' teaching experiences, including the curriculum design, intentional selection of teaching interventions, their purposes of teaching, and how they navigate the teacher-learner relationship.

Other Modifications from the Initial Data Analysis

I identified three peripheral aspects of the participants' teaching experiences in the initial data analysis, including (1) previous experiences with receiving and providing research education, (2) a stronger sense of professional identities and perceived personal growth, and (3) the expressed need for a community for research educators in counseling. With a more thorough conceptualization of the data, I removed these three emergent themes from the final collective map because of the overlap between these peripheral aspects and the central elements of the participants' experiences. All seven participants mentioned a stronger sense of professional

identity and perceived personal growth, underscoring an increased level of self-confidence. They did not mark these experiences as impactful or critical in the second-round interviews. The increased confidence aligned with the final theme, emotionality. And the stronger sense of professional identity, as instructors, counselors, and scholars, contributes to the purposes of teaching. Hence, the emergent theme of “a stronger sense of professional identities and perceived personal growth” no longer represents a unique aspect of the participants’ experiences.

Likewise, most participants shared their previous experiences of receiving research education and conducting research in the first-round interview, and they did not expand their narratives on these topics during the second-round interview. I recognized the diverse meaning-making processes of their previous research experiences among the participants. Some participants, like Andrés and Joseph, reflected on the way of being of their former research course instructors and used it to inform how they addressed issues in the teacher-learner relationship. Other participants, like the Divine Miss M, recounted their learning experiences and clarified their purposes of teaching. Given that the participants utilized the previous experiences differently, it seemed superficial and inaccurate to summarize these narratives as one theme merely based on similar contents.

In the first-round interview and first-round interpreting dialogue, some participants conveyed a willingness to connect with other participants of this study and have a roundtable discussion on specific topics, such as choosing a suitable textbook for master’s-level students and experiential learning activities. These narratives led me to identify an emergent theme as “the expressed need for a community for research educators in counseling.” Yet, after listening to the participants’ appreciation for the cross-institutional mentorship and other professional connections, I found this emergent theme fit in the final theme “The Profession: Standards and

Connections” well and deleted it from the concept map.

Interpreting Dialogue

In exploring through the second-round interviews and data analysis, the value of interpreting dialogues to the participant-researcher relationship continued to be evident. Going into the second-round interviews, I reminded myself to attend to the participants’ self-reported critical incidents and follow up on the details related to these identified sensitive experiences. I also aimed to maintain an open and flexible stance for the incoming data. By immersing myself in the participants’ narratives during and after the second interview sessions, I pursued a clear picture of the participants’ lived experiences and meaning-making. I also modified the first-round data analysis with the integration of new information. I again met the participants on Zoom for 20 to 30 minutes to check the accuracy and representativeness of their individual narrative concept maps and the collective themes.

Collaborative Data Analysis on Individual Narratives

Similar to the first-round interpreting dialogues, I presented the concept map of my data analysis to the participants, providing space for questions, clarifications, confirmation, or rebuttals. After explaining the themes, I asked three general questions (created prior to the session): Do you feel these themes are congruent with your lived experience? What, if anything, may be missing for you? What, if anything, would you like to add to, remove from, and change in this concept map of these themes?

Most participants readily and strongly agreed that these themes fit the experiences and meanings they had been sharing. For example, Molly expressed an appreciation for the cyclical structure of her individual concept map. As she said, “Because I think that’s really accurate, that it is kind of that constant process of trying something, seeing if it works... I think that cycle is

always really important to just keep things fresh... and always having that evaluation.” (Molly, Interpreting Dialogue 2)

The Divine Miss M provided constructive feedback on her individual concept map by highlighting her experiences and effort in integrating students’ feedback. After my introduction and explanation of the original concept map I created for her individual narratives, she said,

part of my reflection is also reflecting on what students have told me about where they’re connecting, what they’re not getting, and what they want more time on. So, I would say that that has a really big component in each of those areas, being able to adapt to what’s working and what isn’t. Each time I have had opportunity to present the material. (The Divine Miss M, Interpreting Dialogue 2)

By analyzing and interpreting what she just shared, I believed it presented something I missed when conceptualizing this participant’s experiences in navigating her relationship with the students. Thus, I slowed down our conversation and brought up her descriptions in the interviews, such as observing the students’ reactions to teaching interventions. She further emphasized the importance of “engaging the students and asking those questions. Like, what do you need more on this, listening to the student evaluations of the course at the end of the semester.” (The Divine Miss M, Interpreting Dialogue 2) Thus, I changed the theme of “Earning Respect” to “Feedback and Mutual Respect.” And the Divine Miss M confirmed this modification. I feel grateful for her openness and patience in sharing her authentic reactions with me, which facilitated the trustworthiness of this study.

Discussions on Collective Themes

Once the participant articulated verification that the individual concept map matched their lived experience as a whole, I presented the concept map of the collective themes and

explained my data analysis. Participants agreed with the collective concept map (Figure 16) and provided no additional feedback. The participants also expressed an appreciation for the sense of community they experienced when seeing the collective themes. For example, Molly said, “I’m glad we got to do this together. I think it’s made me think a lot more about what that experience has been like and where I’ve come from, and how I’ve grown.” (Molly, Interpreting Dialogue 2) Winifred Sanderson and Andrés also expressed similar thoughts and feelings in the interpreting dialogues.

When I was explaining the possible struggles in navigating the teacher-learner relationship, especially challenges for instructors with marginalized identities, Natalie followed up on this topic,

it could be a unique experience towing on the identities that a faculty member or instructor holds when they take on teaching a course like that, even if they enjoy the content, enjoy teaching it. That doesn’t mean the students are all going to like enjoy it with them. But the microaggressions that happen as a result of teaching the class and then being on the receiving end is really harmful. So, yeah, I have heard of that. And it’s unfortunate that it does happen. (Natalie, Interpreting Dialogue 2)

Although I scheduled all the meetings with the participants individually and kept their personal information confidential, it was apparent that a sense of connection emerged when we began to discuss the collective experiences in the second-round interpreting dialogues.

I walked away from these final meetings with the participants feeling confident that my final results closely fit their lived experiences and meaning-making of teaching the master’s-level research course. For me, it was a collaborative effort to develop the concept maps for furthering the understanding of my participants’ experiences. I feel grateful to listen to their

narratives and facilitate their inner processes. More importantly, I am honored to foster a sense of community among some participants through the interpreting dialogues.

Summary

This chapter outlined the final analysis of each individual participant's narratives and the collective analysis of the superordinate themes. I focused primarily on understanding the unique experiences and meaning-making of each participant individually to support Smith et al (2009) focus on idiographic qualitative research. Following the completion of individual themes, I focused on creating the cases within a theme, or collective analysis of their experiences. During this process, I highlighted the systemic nature of the teaching experiences of the participants and recognized the interconnections among different aspects of their teaching experiences.

CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION

The results of this IPA study revealed the experiences of pre-tenured, tenure-track counselor educators teaching the master's-level research course. I identified final themes as (1) emotionality, (2) content knowledge, (3) teaching strategies, (4) purposes of teaching, and (5) the teacher-learner relationship. The individual and collective themes provide a glimpse of insight into the essential components of the participants' experiences. Through data analysis, I also recognized different systems' direct and indirect impacts on pre-tenured, tenure-track counselor educators' teaching experiences. These systems include the institution, the counseling profession, and the sociocultural environment.

In this chapter, I highlight the results presented in chapter four and connect the findings of this study with the existing literature. I provide potential implications for counseling programs and counselor educators in providing effective research training and advocating for the research base in our profession. I also discuss limitations and possible future research to conclude the chapter.

Summary of Findings

Social science scholars noticed insufficient literature on teaching introductory research methodology courses, leading instructors to face challenges (Earley, 2014). Counselor educators have highlighted the importance of research in practice (Kaplan & Gladding, 2011) and advocated for effective research training for master's-level CITs (Balkin, 2020; Jorgensen & Umstead, 2020). Nevertheless, most articles on pedagogical practice in counselor education left out the CACREP-core area of research and program evaluation (Minton et al., 2014; Minton et al., 2018). Instructors' experiences and perceptions of teaching this course remain unnoticed. To this end, I recognized IPA's idiographic nature and conducted this IPA study to explore the

similarities and differences among the participants' lived experiences and meaning-making. Through in-depth analysis of pre-tenured, tenure track counseling faculty's lived experiences of teaching the master's-level research course, I identified five collective themes to represent the most intense and impactful experiences among all participants, including observing and experiencing emotions, navigating content knowledge, mindfully choosing teaching strategies, reflecting on their purposes of teaching, and navigating the teacher-learner relationship.

The study results reveal certain consistencies with current literature and contribute significant insights to future investigations and inquiries. Borders et al. (2014) discussed the dearth of well-trained research educators in our profession and recognized a stronger interest in providing research education among new faculty than more seasoned faculty. Waalkes et al. (2018) addressed concerns regarding beginning counselor educators' unreadiness for their teaching responsibilities and suggested teaching mentorship and fostering a collaborative department culture. Waalkes et al. (2021) conducted a consensual qualitative research investigation to explore beginning counselor educators' experiences of growth and challenges in teaching. They found six growth categories, including engaging students, increased confidence and resiliency, adapting to student needs, purposeful course design, self-reflection as a tool for growth, and relationship building (Waalkes et al., 2021). The common challenges among the participants were balancing faculty roles, boundaries and connections with students, challenges in aligning andragogy with student needs, and grading student work and providing feedback (Waalkes et al., 2021). The narratives of the seven participants in my study revealed some resemblance to the findings of previous research projects. I attempted to thoroughly investigate the participants' experiences and perspectives in teaching this course as junior faculty and explore these pre-tenured, tenure-track counselor educators' growth, challenges, and needs. I will

review the main findings and further illustrate the connections to the literature discussed in chapter one.

Final Themes

Five final themes collectively represent the essential components of the seven participants' teaching experiences in the master's-level research course, including (1) emotionality, (2) content knowledge, (3) teaching strategies, (4) purposes of teaching, and (5) the teacher-learner relationship. The participants also provided insights into how their interactions with different systems impacted their teaching experiences. To demonstrate the participants' experiences and perspectives, I will start with the central component among the five final themes, Emotionality.

Emotionality

The theme "Emotionality" represented the emotions the participants experienced and observed in teaching the master's-level research course. Most participants shared their insecurity and anxiety when they started teaching this course, especially those who taught it as first-year professors. Some participants discussed imposter syndrome and recounted their fear of challenging questions from students. Their unreadiness aligns with previous research findings of beginning counselor educators' stress and overwhelmed feelings around teaching (Waalkes, 2016; Hall & Hulse, 2010). The participants also reported increased confidence as a counselor educator and an increased sense of ownership in the research course, which is consistent with the "increased confidence and resiliency" category identified by Waalkes et al. (2021) However, all seven participants described the research course as content-heavy in nature, and most said they needed to attempt more to engage students in the learning materials compared to other classes they had taught. The observation of students' lack of participation contributed to the pre-tenured,

tenure-track professors' anxiety and insecurity.

The participants portrayed other positive emotions they had experienced in the research course, including joy, happiness, excitement, surprise, pride, gratitude, relief, and feeling touched. Most participants shared their excitement and pride when witnessing students' growth. Waalkes (2016) reported similar emotions in a study on pre-tenured, tenure-track counselor educators' teaching experiences and doctoral teaching preparation. Participants also mentioned feeling concerned, annoyed, embarrassed, ashamed, appalled, disgusted, disappointed, frustrated, hurt, and vulnerable. Many negative feelings emerged when the instructor received or observed microaggression in the classroom. Most published articles left these issues alone except for research projects with a specific focus on individuals with marginalized identities. Two participants recounted that they received much more microaggressions in the research course than in other teaching experiences, and they related the increased biases to some common stereotypes in society. The stereotypical image of math and statistics as a male domain plus a lack of understanding of the differences between counseling research and math led to extra difficulties for woman research educators.

Notably, multiple participants recounted emotional experiences and critical incidents in their experiences outside of the classroom. For example, Andrés shared his nervousness when reviewing the teaching evaluation after his first attempt at teaching the master's-level research course. He experienced intense relief after reading the students' comments about how much they had learned. The Divine Miss M talked about both disappointment and excitement in receiving mentorship from her colleagues while teaching the research course in her first semester after graduating from the doctoral program. Winifred Sanderson reported feeling emotionally exhausted after their first semester teaching this course. Despite researchers' attention to

mentorship for junior counseling faculty (e.g., Borders et al., 2011; Waalkes et al., 2022), these nuanced yet vivid emotions remain under-researched in the existing literature.

In parallel with many research articles on research education in social sciences (e.g., Davis, 2019; Earley, 2014; Kilburn et al., 2014; Nind & Lewthwaite, 2018a), all seven participants shared their observations of students' fear and anxiety in the master's-level research and program evaluation course. Further, they explored the source of students' stress. Molly realized the learning materials were too advanced to be comprehensible for the students. Winifred Sanderson learned more about their students' journeys in the higher education system and noticed students' traumatic experiences related to math and statistics. Piper recognized the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on some students' wellness and temporarily decreased capacity for academic work. The participants also discussed their responses to students' stress, such as modifying the reading materials and assignments, providing more connecting time, and practicing grounding exercises at the start of the class. Nind and Lewthwaite (2018a) observed research methods instructors being "willing to take a deficit stance in how they talked about learner characteristics" (p. 79). They advocated for a more inclusive and holistic approach to research education (Nind & Lewthwaite, 2018a). In this IPA study, the participants acknowledged students' fear and anxiety. They described these emotional reactions with empathy and compassion and were open to adjusting the learning materials, denoted by the Content Knowledge theme.

Content Knowledge

All seven participants discussed the content knowledge aspect of the master's-level research course in a counseling program. As Kilburn et al. (2014) stated, teaching research methods requires combining theoretical knowledge, practical experiences, and mastery of

various practical skills. Notwithstanding a few participants' initial uncertainties about their understanding of different research methods, all participants gained confidence in content knowledge before or at the beginning of their teaching experiences.

However, they spent more time and energy navigating the chosen learning materials for the master's-level CITs they were teaching. All participants appreciated the guidance provided by the CACREP standards (CACREP, 2015). However, they recognized the flexible room for instructors to decide what materials they use. Multiple participants discussed using and combining different textbooks and removing some contents from the syllabus to bring relief to the students. Waalkes et al. (2021) identified "purposeful course design" as a growth category among beginning counselor educators. They described this category as being more intentional in designing the curriculum and having increased flexibility in time management during class meetings (Waalkes et al., 2021). The participants in this IPA study portrayed a similar process in exploring the learning materials and course design. They also spoke about how they delivered the content knowledge, as represented by the theme, Teaching Strategies.

Teaching Strategies

The most commonly mentioned teaching strategy among the participants was active learning activity, often combined with a group format. All seven participants introduced a final project in the master's-level research course. They also discussed numerous other teaching strategies, including experiential learning activities, inviting guest speakers, integrating the research concepts with special topics related to counseling, creating Flash lectures or short videos, Kahoot games and quizzes, in-class statistic exercises, group working sessions in class, peer review and peer feedback sessions, providing mentorship during office hours, discussing group norms in the class, encouraging participation, contemplative work in the classroom, and

sharing the instructor's lived experiences in conducting research.

To discuss research methods education in social science disciplines, Wagner et al. (2011) analyzed 195 articles published in 61 academic journals between 1997 and 2007. They identified seven common themes in the existing literature, one of which was specific techniques for teaching research methods (Wagner et al., 2011). Likewise, Earley (2014) reviewed 89 studies on research education and listed diverse teaching methods and techniques, such as active learning, service learning, problem-based learning, experiential learning, and online learning modules. The overlap between the participants' narratives and the existing literature was apparent.

As researchers in social sciences indicated, many research methods instructors developed their teaching strategies through trial and error (Earley, 2014; Nind & Lewthwaite, 2018a). The participants in this study discussed a similar pattern. Some participants started their teaching experience by witnessing students' explicit frustration and lack of interest, and they chose to experiment with different ways of explicating the research concepts. They integrated students' feedback to modify the teaching strategies by observing their immediate reactions and asking them what helped their understanding and what did not. Unlike most published articles conceptualizing teaching methods as an independent element in research education, the participants discussed how they employed particular strategies to serve their Purposes of Teaching, as introduced by the following theme.

Purposes of Teaching

The "Purposes of Teaching" theme emerged in the participants' narratives when they reflected on their goals and objectives of teaching the master's-level research course. Multiple participants accentuated their belief that master's-level CITs should become wise consumers,

instead of producers, of counseling research. They recognized the limitations of published journal articles and underlined the importance of critical-thinking skills. To explicate this intention, they emphasized their nuanced maneuvers of teaching interventions. For example, Winifred Sanderson guided their students to provide constructive feedback and reviewed their peer-review feedback. The participants also underscored the counselor professional identity in teaching the master's-level research class and aimed to make the course relevant to students' future work. Molly encouraged students to think about the marginalized populations they served, and Piper empowered her students to view research and scholarly work as advocacy. When discussing professional identities and purposes of teaching, Joseph stressed the importance of evidence-based counseling practice. Some participants emphasized their goal of showing students what research could look like in real life. Andrés switched the individual research project to a group assignment, allowing students to deal with different opinions. Natalie's program offered a project-based research course and required students to collect data from their internship sites. Molly found sharing her research projects helpful in attracting students' attention in class.

Earley (2014) pointed out a noticeable gap in the existing literature on research education in social sciences as the content and goals of the research methods course. As CACREP provided general guidelines for the content of the master's-level research and program evaluation course (CACREP, 2015), the counselor educators designed the curriculum thoughtfully. They also selected teaching strategies congruent with their purposes of teaching. Kilburn et al. (2014) suggested three complementary and inter-related pedagogical goals in research education, including (1) making the research process visible by actively engaging students in the aspects of the methods at hand, (2) facilitating learning through the experience of conducting research, and

(3) encouraging critical reflection on research practice. The participants' purposes of teaching align with these three goals.

In the counseling field, Kaplan and Gladding (2011) recognized seven consensus issues for advancing the future of counseling, one of which was expanding and promoting the research base of professional counseling, especially encouraging interest among practitioners and CITs. Balkin (2020) argued that counseling professionals should produce more client-centered outcome research to demonstrate the effectiveness of counseling modalities and interventions. Correspondingly, the purposes of teaching mentioned by the participants concerned the students' future roles as counselors and the clients they would serve. Besides fulfilling the purposes of teaching through an intentional curriculum and selected teaching strategies, the participants recounted their experiences navigating the Teacher-Learner Relationship, as demonstrated by the last final theme.

The Teacher-Learner Relationship

The teacher-learner relationship was the most impactful component of the participants' lived experiences because they spent the most time talking about this element and showed the most emotions. All seven participants approached the relationship with empathy and compassion. They verbally validated students' feelings and responded to their needs. Waalkes et al. (2021) regarded adapting to student needs and relationship building as common growth categories among beginning counselor educators. More specifically, the authors talked about the new faculty's authenticity and transparency and how they shifted from focusing on their performance in the classroom to letting the students take the lead. These accounts parallel the participants' narratives in this study. Nind and Lewthwaite (2018a) suggested student-centered teaching methods and a more strength-based approach to research education. Relatedly, the

participants' accounts demonstrated their progress in student-centered teaching practice.

However, some participants encountered difficulties managing the classroom and gaining students' respect as research educators, frequently associated with social identities, stereotypes, and microaggressions. The Divine Miss M reported receiving the most questions from students about her credentials in this course. Likewise, Piper stated receiving more negative comments on her hairstyles and mannerisms in the teaching evaluations for her research course than in other classes she taught. Both participants attributed these challenges to their social identities. These biases elicited complicated feelings immediately and impacted the participants' sense of self and emotional wellness for longer.

Although counselors and counselor educators embrace diversity and social justice, CITs are not immune from personal biases, and counselor educators are not immune to feeling hurt by microaggressions. The participants in this study struggled with internalizing the perceived biases and relied on self-reflection and affinity groups. Waalkes et al. (2021) identified self-reflection as a tool for new counselor educators' growth. Nevertheless, like most articles on teaching practice in counselor education, they did not address diversity and equity issues in the manuscript but identified the teaching experiences of counselor educators with different intersecting identities as a direction for future research (Waalkes et al., 2021). As the IPA method allows researchers to consider the contextual factors of the participants' lived experiences and explore the variances among participants' perspectives, I prioritize the participants' voices and address their perceived biases and experiences of microaggressions, especially when the nature of the research course added an extra layer to their challenges.

The Interconnection among the Themes

As highlighted in the previous chapter, the essential components of the participants'

teaching experiences, represented by the five final themes, were interconnected in a dynamic system rather than independent and static. Each participant shared the critical incidents in their experience teaching the master's-level research course. In many of these situations, the participants observed their feelings and the students' emotions changing quickly with ongoing interactions, further impacting the teacher-learner relationship. Meanwhile, they often underwent a cognitive process of making instructional decisions simultaneously. Emotionality connects the essential components of the participants' teaching experiences by impacting their choices of teaching strategies and purposeful course design, indicating changes in the teacher-learner relationship, and providing opportunities to revisit their purposes of teaching.

However, few researchers across social sciences or the counseling field conceptualized these components as a unified whole. Wagner et al. (2011) suggested that scholars and educators should offer comprehensive theoretical and empirical analysis on three key areas: (1) the role and desirable characteristics of a research methods instructor, (2) the challenges of teaching and learning specific aspects of research methods, and (3) similarities and differences in research methods across disciplines (Wagner et al., 2011). They also advocated for a pedagogical culture, "the exchange of ideas within a climate of systematic debate, investigation, and evaluation surrounding all aspects of teaching and learning in the subject." (Wagner et al., 2011, p. 75). To cultivate this pedagogical culture, scholars and research methods educators should obtain profound insights into the teaching experiences of research methods course instructors and comprehend their experiences as a changing process instead of static and isolated pieces.

Understanding the Experience in a System

Although the participants focused their narratives on their direct teaching experiences in the master's-level research course, some talked about how they navigated the larger systems,

such as program traditions and institutional cultures, professional standards and accreditation bodies, counselor education job market, and the sociocultural environment. These systems impacted the participants' teaching experiences directly and indirectly. The indirect influences included teaching virtually due to university policies in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic and revising some assignments to meet the requirement of CACREP and other accreditation bodies. On the other hand, social events and contextual factors might directly affect the instructors' and students' mental status and emotional needs. The participants acknowledged the direct impact of the social events and responded by adjusting their curriculum design and teaching interventions and prioritizing the students' immediate needs. Waalkes (2016) explored pre-tenured, tenure-track counselor educators' experiences of doctoral teaching preparation and teaching mentorship and discussed some systemic factors, such as teaching load and the importance of teaching for promotion and tenure. However, most researchers did not explore sociocultural factors and other environmental conditions when studying counselor educators' teaching experiences. Acknowledging the progress made in developing the 2024 CACREP standards and witnessing other social events, scholars should regard the larger systems as dynamic and evolving rather than an irrelevant background of the subject of focus.

During the first-round interviews, two participants mentioned their observations of the counselor education job market. The Divine Miss M utilized the capability of teaching the master's-level research course as a strategy in job interviews. However, the other participant, Joseph, described having adjunct professors teach the research course as an administrative decision in the institution. Another participant, Winifred Sanderson, went through the process of shifting the class from a general educational research course taught by non-counseling faculty to a course with a focus on counseling research offered by the counseling program. Researchers

have called for more adequately trained research educators within the counseling profession and observed departments hiring non-counseling professors to teach research courses (Borders et al., 2014). The varied perceptions and observations among participants possibly imply evident but insufficient progress in training more research educators in counseling.

All seven participants recognized procedures, such as program course sequence, university policies, and professional standards, as systemic factors. Meanwhile, they underscored the impact of specific interpersonal experiences in the larger systems. These critical social interactions included receiving teaching mentorship from colleagues, processing perceived biases and microaggressions with peers from underrepresented identities, and discussing barriers and strategies in teaching the master's-level research course with other research educators in counseling. Wagner et al. (2011) called for a pedagogical culture in research methods education that fosters the exchange of ideas through systematic discussion and examination of different aspects of teaching and learning. I heard the participants' desire to build a community for counseling research educators, which enriched the implications of this study.

Implications

The results of this study offer practical implications for counseling research educators to teach the master's-level research course, experienced counseling faculty to mentor pre-tenured counseling faculty, and counseling programs to prepare doctoral students and beginning counselor educators for their teaching responsibilities. The findings contribute to our understanding of pre-tenured, tenure-track counseling faculty's experiences teaching the master's-level research course and add to the existing literature in distinct ways. In this section, I provide an overview of the implications and considerations for counseling faculty navigating their new role as research educators or guiding beginning counselor educators. Additionally, I

discuss the implications for counseling programs to create a nurturing environment for mentorship and extend assistance to new counselor educators during their transition to the faculty position. These implications contribute to the literature on research education in counseling, teaching preparation for emerging counselor educators, and advocacy for the research base in our profession.

Research Education for Master's-Level CITs

Scholars explored the need for more well-trained research educators in our profession and observed that many departments hired non-counseling professors to teach research courses (Borders et al., 2014). Some counseling faculty were concerned that courses taught outside the counseling program lacked relevance for counseling students' interests (Borders et al., 2014). As counseling research educators, the participants in this IPA study expressed a deep commitment to making the research course relevant to the master's-level CITs' interest and applicable to their counseling practice. More specifically, the new research educators learned to encourage the students to explore their research interests and empower them to develop their research proposals or projects based on their genuine passion. Some instructors developed a series of special topics related to counseling and combined these topics with the research concepts, leading students to understand the connections between research evidence and counselors' work with clients. By their accounts, they put much effort into getting students' buy-in. Along with the recommended strategies for teaching the research courses in the existing literature (e.g., Jorgensen & Duncan, 2015a, 2015b; Rehfuss & Meyer, 2012; Steele & Rawls, 2015), the participants in this study introduced related teaching methods and added original techniques, offering options for other research educators to tryout.

Furthermore, the participants portrayed the trial-and-error process of modifying the

curriculum and selecting teaching strategies. Some participants observed students' explicit anger and frustration. Some participants saw students' tears in the classroom. Some participants received more questions about their credentials and criticisms from students in this course than in any other classes they had taught. Most participants emphasized the importance of receiving students' feedback during this trial-and-error process, and they carefully evaluated the students' developmental stages. Sometimes their experimentation with a new teaching strategy landed well. Sometimes it did not. They received feedback from students and kept adapting their approaches to the class. A few participants also shared nuanced experiences in their teaching practice, such as intentional utilization of office hours, informal gatekeeping and remediation, and handling students' verbal aggression.

This information can inform course planning and emotional preparation. Learning from these participants' experiences can help other counseling research educators set realistic expectations of students' learning outcomes and possibly assist them in developing effective teaching strategies. Additionally, the stories of these lived experiences help research educators normalize the hardship they might face and validate their emotional experiences. Waalkes (2016) discussed the solitary nature of teaching as a common challenge for beginning instructors and provided examples, such as feeling disconnected from colleagues and not knowing how much struggle was typical. The participants' stories might offer a sense of community for other pre-tenured, tenure-track counseling faculty and reduce their feelings of isolation. The findings of this study assist scholars in comprehending teaching experiences as a dynamic and spontaneous process.

Preparing Doctoral Students for Teaching Research Courses

All seven participants regarded the master's-level research and program evaluation

course as a content-focused class, which they recognized as a unique challenge in students' learning. They all obtained confidence in mastering the content knowledge and knowing the concepts well enough as instructors. Multiple participants reported sharing their research experiences with the students to show them what counseling research could look like and enhance their participation and interest. This information indicated the effectiveness of research training for counselor education doctoral students. Still, most participants experienced a sense of insecurity, such as the imposter syndrome, and encountered difficulties implementing teaching strategies and managing the classroom. This finding matches the other researchers' exploration of beginning counselor educators' unreadiness for their teaching responsibilities (Borders et al., 2019; Waalkes et al., 2018).

The participants described their teaching experiences as a developing and spontaneous process with ongoing experimentation. They also explained the interconnections among different components of their experiences, implying the importance of an instructional theory. Similar to how counselors utilize counseling theories to define their roles in the therapeutic relationship and guide their case conceptualizations and interventions, instructors should also identify their instructional theories as a roadmap to guide their purposeful course design, teaching strategies, and approaches to the teacher-learner relationship. Researchers have advised counselor educators and programs to provide ongoing mentorship for doctoral students and new faculty and encourage students to start teaching, co-teaching, and guest speaking activities early in their doctoral studies (Borders et al., 2019; Waalkes et al., 2018). In a consensual qualitative research dissertation on beginning counselor educators' teaching readiness, Waalkes (2016) reported varied levels of emphasis on instructional theory or teaching philosophy among counselor education doctoral programs. Meanwhile, some participants in the abovementioned study

expressed a willingness to participate in more discussions of teaching philosophy and theory from their doctoral program (Waalkes, 2016). Although this IPA study was not focused on doctoral teaching preparation or teaching philosophy development, the participants' narratives of the teaching process align with the findings of other research projects, indicating beginning counselor educators' need for more knowledge of teaching philosophies and more opportunities to apply their instructional theories. Therefore, the core faculty of counselor education doctoral programs should evaluate the comprehensiveness of the doctoral-level teaching course and allow space in teaching mentorship for the mentees to explore their teaching philosophies and reflect on their application of the identified theories.

Further, some participants experienced microaggressions in the classroom and encountered difficulties managing the classroom under these circumstances. Two participants recounted facing more challenges in the research class than in other courses. One participant reported feeling confused at first and appalled after recognizing particular students' behaviors and comments as microaggressions. Although counselor educators might experience uncomfortable and complicated feelings when acknowledging the presence of microaggressions and biases within society and among CITs, sufficient preparation in teaching can assist doctoral students, particularly those with marginalized identities, in comprehending what the counselor education profession entails. Through this IPA study, I prioritize the participants' voices and add real-life examples of stereotypes and microaggressions to the existing literature. The examples help research educators to recognize and understand possible risks related to teaching research method courses. Such lived experiences are also a notice for counselor educators to prepare doctoral students for similar dilemmas, further suggesting scholars address the impact of sociocultural factors when examining experiences among counselor educators in general, such as

teaching, supervision, and scholarly activities.

Mentoring New Counseling Faculty

All seven participants discussed their relationships with their departments and universally reported receiving support from their colleagues. The support included having syllabi from previous years, having a voice in the department, and always having their questions answered by colleagues. One participant felt grateful for receiving feedback after having the teaching mentor observe a class. Most participants in this study said they perceived much autonomy in their first time teaching the master's-level research class and did not experience any micromanagement. While appreciating the trust of their colleagues, some participants articulated a wish for more guidance and structures at that time. They wondered if they were doing things correctly as a new instructor and did not know where to find immediate feedback. Although they figured it out gradually, some participants experienced a sense of insecurity throughout the process. One participant specifically shared a strategy to build relationships with colleagues through shared experiences and figure out their expertise.

Through an investigation of pre-tenured, tenure-track counseling faculty's experiences of teaching mentorship, researchers identified receiving direct observation and feedback on teaching as a desired but missed component in teaching mentorship (Waalkes et al., 2022). Other desired qualities missing in teaching mentorship include a more structured process for the mentee's reflection and more time for mentorship meetings (Waalkes et al., 2022). These results parallel the participants' narratives in this study. Counseling programs should consider structured teaching mentorship for new faculty, particularly those recently graduating from doctoral programs. The structure of teaching mentorship may include scheduled meetings, identified developing objectives and goals, direct feedback after observing classes, and reviewing teaching

evaluations. Borders et al. (2011) proposed ten principles for good practice in mentoring pre-tenured, tenure-track counseling faculty, including communicating expectations, providing feedback, encouraging mentorship from senior faculty, supporting the mentees' teaching practice, and fostering a balance between professional life and personal life. Counseling programs may use these principles as a checklist to evaluate and adapt their current mentorship structure.

Most participants in this study shared their observation of a lack of interest in teaching the master's-level research class among their colleagues. They were hired to be the only instructors to teach the research course in their departments, and some participants were still the only research educators when they participated in my study. These situations created a sense of isolation. One participant recounted feeling "disappointed" that other faculty did not care much about the research course. This participant also clarified that the most helpful element in teaching mentorship was not learning particular teaching strategies but witnessing other people's passion for teaching. Realistically, the teaching mentor may not teach the same classes as the beginning counselor educator. However, expressing genuine care about the mentee's work and showing passion for their growth can dramatically change the new faculty's experiences. Relatedly, Waalkes et al. (2022) also recognized the importance of relational support offered by the teaching mentor and emphasized the emotional connection between the mentor and the mentee.

Furthermore, scholars have repeatedly suggested integrating research throughout the entirety of the program (e.g., Granello & Granello, 1998; Letourneau, 2015; Sexton, 2000; Steele & Rawls, 2015), hoping this integration familiarizes students with the concept of research and makes counseling research relatable. Considering the participants' narrative in this study, incorporating counseling research into other core counseling curriculum courses reduces the

research educators' isolated feelings and increases their sense of community in the department.

As discussed in the previous section, perceived biases and microaggression led to immediate complicated feelings and longer-term impacts on emotional wellness. These circumstances can involve gatekeeping and remediation issues, adding another layer to the instructor's quandary. One participant in this study reported receiving microaggression from a former colleague and feeling supported by other colleagues. Leaders and faculty of counseling programs should have the courage to step into these unfavorable situations and have uncomfortable conversations. Thacker and Minto (2021) identified eight common types of adverse experiences faced by professionals with minoritized identities, including mentorship difficulties. Besides the infusion of multiculturalism in course curricula and department policies, they suggested applying an intersectionality framework for cross-racial mentoring, requiring the mentor to reflect on their expressions of power and privilege and further create more space for the minoritized mentee to express themselves (Thacker & Minto, 2021).

Advocacy as a Profession

Kaplan and Gladding (2011) identified expanding and promoting the research base of professional counseling as one of the seven consensus issues for advancing the future of counseling. They emphasized developing qualitative and quantitative outcome research and encouraging more active involvement among practitioners and students (Kaplan & Gladding, 2011). Achieving these consensus goals takes intentional reflexivity and collective action. Reflecting on the findings of this IPA study, I recognize some possible directions for professional advocacy.

Community Building and Cross-Institutional Mentorship

Multiple participants noted that the interactions with their mentors and colleagues were

impactful. Some participants expressed a need for a counseling research educator community to exchange resources and receive cross-institutional mentorship for teaching research courses. They also sought chances to discuss topics like textbook selection for master's-level students and integrating experiential learning activities into research courses. Granted that some programs only have one instructor for the master's-level research course, such communities help reduce the research educators' sense of isolation and foster a pedagogical culture in counseling research education. One possible opportunity is to start an Interest Network within ACES. For example, the ACES Career Interest Network is a platform for career counseling instructors to share resources for effective teaching. Similarly, developing an interest network for research instructors can provide a better space for research course instructors to connect, discuss best teaching practices, and engage in other collaborations. Scholars in counseling have established several communities, such as the Association for Assessment and Research in Counseling (AARC) and the ACES Research Institute, to promote best practices in assessment, research, and evaluation in counseling. The center of their missions was conducting research projects instead of teaching research or getting entry-level CITs involved in research learning. New communities for counseling research educators will allow more space for pedagogical discussions than for methodological debates. The pedagogical conversations can not only concern materials and teaching strategies for the research course but also touch upon plans of infusing research into other counseling curricula and familiarizing students with counseling research.

Furthermore, as the counseling research educator communities grow, members can generate resources to support CITs and listen to the voices of CITs and practitioners. Texas AARC has provided a free webinar to facilitate the scholarly practitioner identity among counselors and empower them to conduct research with their counseling practices. Such

continuing education opportunities contribute to CITs' and practitioners' involvement in research activities, and an ACA Task Force can make a difference on a larger scale.

Signature Pedagogy

Jorgenson and Umstead (2020) suggested developing a signature pedagogy in master's-level research training to promote evidence-based counseling practice. They aimed to unify counseling programs and offer guidance to improve research training at the master's level by making research relevant to counseling practices (Jorgenson & Umstead, 2020). They discussed broad and specific considerations of research education in master's-level programs at professional, program, and course levels (Jorgenson & Umstead, 2020). One concrete recommendation was to start coordinated teaching across institutions by employing the same or similar assignments, learning materials, and class activities (Jorgenson & Umstead, 2020).

However, the findings of this IPA study indicated potential barriers to creating a signature pedagogy in the research course. As the participants discussed, systemic structures, such as institutional requirements and the program course sequence, impact the instructors' approaches to a specific course. One participant portrayed the project-based course design requiring students to conduct a study and collect data at their internship sites. The students present their capstone projects at the end of their last semester. Another participant described a program that placed the research course in the first year of students' program of study and utilized it as a tool for academic gatekeeping. These two participants recounted varied teaching experiences, covered different contents, and employed diverse teaching strategies. Counselor educators may find it difficult and impractical to reconcile these divergent course designs and create a signature pedagogy without comparable course sequences.

When instructors at different universities start corresponding teaching, they need to

negotiate the course curriculum, assignments, and class activities to meet each other in the middle ground. This cooperation takes collective efforts and creates new opportunities for counseling research educators to examine different aspects of their teaching practice. Similarities in the original course designs and teaching strategies increase the feasibility of the initial collaboration. Thus, building a community, like an ACES Interest Network for research instructors, allows them to present and compare their course curricula and find collaborators. Although a signature pedagogy in master's-level research training is not a practical short-term goal, some instructors and scholars may start pilot studies through collaborative teaching and offer new insights into this issue.

New Contents in the Master's-Level Research Course Curriculum

CACREP provides a framework for counseling programs and counselor educators to design course curricula. Compared to the 2016 CACREP Standards for the master's-level research and program evaluation course curriculum (CACREP, 2015), the 2024 CACREP Standards Draft 4 integrated a few more components, such as the evidence base for counseling theories and interventions and the concepts of formative assessments and summative assessments (CACREP, 2022). The new draft incorporated two new standards, (1) “practice-based and action research methods” and (2) “use of accountability data to inform decision making and advocacy.” (CACREP, 2022, p. 19) Other detailed modifications include an emphasis on cultural sustainability and developmental responsiveness regarding “outcome measures for counseling services” and “for conducting, interpreting, and reporting the results of research and program evaluation.” (CACREP, 2022, p. 19)

These changes in the CACREP Standards demonstrated a commitment to multicultural and social justice competence, a critical consideration among the participants in this study. The

participants recounted different methods to facilitate the master's-level CITs' multicultural and social justice competence in the research course. These techniques include elaborating on the deficiencies in culturally insensitive research reports, empowering them to critique published journal articles on people with marginalized identities, and challenging them to develop research projects on the minoritized populations they serve. Some participants highlighted their passion for community-based action research and employed these projects to foster a positive attitude toward research among the CITs. They observed that students chose topics and populations they felt connected with professionally and personally in their final research projects. Some instructors shared that students participated more actively in class when the research topics spoke to their cultural backgrounds. Regarding diversifying the counseling profession as a collective goal (Thacker & Minton, 2021), research educators can embody inclusion through a culturally responsive curriculum.

The implications of this study focus on preparing pre-tenured, tenure-track faculty for teaching research methods in counselor education. The participants of this study discussed unique and complex teaching experiences in the master's-level research and program evaluation course. Their narratives accord with existing literature's findings on beginning counselor educators' growth and challenges in teaching, indicating necessary improvements in teaching preparation and mentorship for doctoral students and new faculty. Further, the participants in this study portrayed their teaching experience as an evolving process and explored the direct and indirect impact of various contextual factors. Their accounts help normalize and validate other research educators' experiences and provide insights into practical research training for master's-level CITs. Based on the findings of this IPA study, I explicated possible directions for professional advocacy regarding the master's-level research and program evaluation course,

including building communities for counseling research educators, initial explorations of a signature pedagogy, and integrating multiculturalism into the curricula.

Limitations

Although I made efforts to conduct rigorous research with careful attention given to the methodology and subsequent analysis, this study had a few limitations. Firstly, the participants in this study tended to have meaningful and memorable experiences in teaching the master's-level research course. In the informed consent document, I invited participants to complete two semi-structured interviews lasting between 90 and 150 minutes in total, plus two rounds of interpreting dialogues lasting between 20 and 30 minutes each. With this time and engagement demand, participants who found the teaching experience impactful and reflected on it may be more likely to engage. Unsurprisingly, each participant shared their insights into research education in counseling and recounted their takeaways from their teaching experiences, potentially limiting the diversity of experiences in the sample.

Secondly, among the seven participants, three were teaching the master's-level research class in 2020 when the COVID-19 pandemic started. They all recognized the direct and indirect impacts of the pandemic on their teaching experiences and overall wellness. Despite IPA's focus on cultural and contextual factors, how the pandemic and related issues affected these participants' meaning-making process is unknown.

Lastly, all my data collection and interpreting dialogues with participants were via Zoom. Researchers have explored the utilization of Voice over Internet Protocol technologies in qualitative research interviews and identified it as a practical tool (Janghorban et al., 2014; Lo Iacono et al., 2016). However, online interviews can include challenges and distractions (Mirick & Wladkowski, 2019). For example, one participant answered phone calls or stepped away to

talk briefly with another person during the interviews. Such interruptions may hinder the meaning-making process and further limit the depth of the data.

Future Research

Through this study, I explored the experiences of pre-tenured, tenure-track counselor educators teaching the master's-level research and program evaluation course. This IPA study was a vital first step in understanding the instructors' perspectives on counseling research education for master's-level CITs, leaving several areas for future researchers to investigate. The participants in this study emphasized the interconnections among the critical elements of their teaching experiences and conceptualized teaching as a dynamic and spontaneous process. They also recounted their learning and growth through this journey. These accounts made me wonder about a new research question; how have these counselor educators moved through the learning phases as counseling research educators? A grounded theory study may answer this question and contribute to our knowledge of research educators' development in teaching, further offering implications for teaching preparation and mentorship for doctoral students and new faculty.

Secondly, one participant named their instructional theories clearly and provided specific examples of their application of the approaches when talking about their teaching experiences. Two participants mentioned their teaching philosophies without comprehensive descriptions. Most participants did not touch upon their teaching philosophies in their narratives. Elliott et al. (2019) noted CACREP's emphasis on instructional theories in the doctoral curricula and the lack of standardized teaching training in counselor education. The varied training across programs parallels the participants' wide-ranging narratives in describing their teaching philosophies. As beginning counselor educators expressed a need for more discussions of teaching philosophy and theory from their doctoral program (Waalkes, 2016), a few research questions emerged: How do

counseling faculty continue to develop their teaching philosophies in their first few years of full-time teaching? How have new counselor educators been exposed to instructional theories in their doctoral studies? Elliott et al. (2019) conducted an autoethnographic phenomenological study on doctoral students' experiences in an instructional theory course and advocated for an explicit pedagogical course in counselor education curricula. Grounded theory studies and narrative inquiries on related topics can further deepen our understanding of effective teaching preparation for doctoral students and new counseling faculty.

Swank and Houseknecht (2019) conducted a Delphi study to explore teaching competencies in counselor education. They identified knowledge, skills, professional behaviors, and dispositions as four domains of necessary teaching competencies (Swank & Houseknecht, 2019). The participants in this study said the master's-level research course was content-heavy, creating unique challenges in their teaching experiences. In alignment with Kilburn et al. (2014), they recognized that teaching research courses required a combination of theoretical knowledge, real-world experiences, and mastery of various practice skills. Wagner et al. (2011) suggested that researchers investigate a teacher's role and desirable characteristics in a research methods course. Studies on teaching competencies in research courses can provide insights into these questions.

Each participant identified various teaching strategies to facilitate their students' learning, demonstrating consistency with previous research findings and recommendations (e.g., Jorgensen & Duncan, 2015a, 2015b; Rehfuss & Meyer, 2012; Steele & Rawls, 2015). However, these observations and accounts provided information on only one side of the teaching-learning process. We must conduct more student learning outcome research to promote the evidence base for teaching interventions and instructional theories. Jorgensen and Umstead (2020) proposed

collaborative teaching across institutions with similar assignments, textbooks, course materials, and class activities, creating opportunities for data collection and student learning outcome evaluation. Additionally, Kaplan and Gladding (2011) emphasized developing qualitative and quantitative outcome research. To explore students' learning outcomes through the qualitative lens, researchers can conduct phenomenological studies on students' learning experiences and perspectives, which facilitate our understanding of effective teaching methods. On the other hand, the development of scales on students' attitudes, knowledge, and skills related to counseling research will allow scholars to examine quantitative learning outcomes more comprehensively and identify gaps in research course designs.

Lastly, Jorgenson and Umstead (2020) suggested developing a signature pedagogy and unifying counseling programs to improve research training at the master's level. Although the participants of this IPA study have recounted diverse teaching experiences within different program structures, they have shared similar purposes of teaching. Thus, we may gain insights into possible signature pedagogy by studying how counseling research educators view the master's-level research course and how they define the essential components of the course curricula. Content analysis and consensual qualitative research both allow researchers to work with a relatively large sample and provide quantified descriptions of the research findings.

Conclusion

I completed this IPA study to explore pre-tenure, tenure-track counselor educators' lived experience teaching the master's-level research and program evaluation course. Seven participants engaged in two semi-structured interviews and two individual interpreting dialogues. After an in-depth analysis of each participant's narratives, I created superordinate themes and visualized their experiences by developing a concept map in accordance with the idiographic

focus of IPA. I also identified five final collective themes to represent the most intense and impactful experiences among all participants, including observing and experiencing emotions, navigating content knowledge, mindfully choosing teaching strategies, reflecting on their purposes of teaching, and navigating the teacher-learner relationship.

To promote the trustworthiness of this study, I took extensive measures such as prolonged engagement, two rounds of interpreting dialogues with every participant, reflexive journaling to monitor my biases and reactions, and weekly meetings with my dissertation committee chair to process and audit evolving themes. I also noted the limitations of this study. Firstly, all participants recounted unforgettable experiences teaching the master's-level research course, possibly limiting the range of perspectives in the sample. Another limitation was the unknown impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on some participants' meaning-making process. The third limitation was the decreased depth of the data due to online interactions with participants. Recommendations for future research include grounded theory studies on how counselor educators moved through the learning phases as counseling research educators, Delphi studies on teaching competencies in counseling research courses, and using qualitative and quantitative students' learning outcome research to demonstrate the effectiveness of research education and identify gaps in teaching research methods in counseling programs.

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Appendix A

Research Participant Recruitment Announcement

Subject Line: Teaching the Master's-Level Research Course – Full-Time Counselor Educator Participants Needed - \$50 Amazon Gift Card

Dear Counselor Educators,

My name is Daisy Zhaoxuan Zhou, and I am a doctoral candidate in Counselor Education and Counseling at Idaho State University. I am currently studying *beginning counselor educators' teaching experiences in the master's-level research and program evaluation class* as part of my dissertation requirement for my Ph.D. The purpose of this study is to understand how new counselor educators encounter and make meaning of the teaching experiences in the master's-level research class.

Eligibility criteria for this study included:

- (a) the participant holds a doctoral degree from a CACREP-accredited program,
- (b) the participant subjectively identifies themselves as a counselor educator and have been working full-timely in a CACREP-accredited program after receiving the doctoral degree,
- (c) the participant taught/teaches the master's-level research and program evaluation course as a pre-tenured (tenure-track position) counseling faculty,
- (d) the participant has been a full-time counselor educator for more than two years and has not been a full-time counselor educator for seven or more years, and
- (e) the participant must be willing to be interviewed and provide consent by completing and submitting the demographic questionnaire.

The survey link below will connect potential participants with a Qualtrics survey to collect basic screening information. This survey should take 5-10 minutes to complete. Once completed, I will review potential applicants, reach out to each with further instructions, and provide an informed consent document for eligible participants.

Participants in this study will be invited to two Zoom-based interviews and two brief member-checking conversations. The first-round interview lasts 60-90 minutes, and the second-round one lasts 30-60 minutes. The member-checking meeting will be 30 minutes each. Participation in this study is entirely voluntary, and participants may withdraw from the study at any time. If selected for the study, every participant will receive a \$50 Amazon gift card.

If you are interested in participating in this study or have further questions, please contact me at zhaoxuanzhou@isu.edu. You may also contact my dissertation committee chair, Dr. Steve Moody, at stevemoody@isu.edu. If you know additional counselor educators who have taught or are teaching the master's-level research class, please feel free to forward this information to them. I appreciate your support and allyship.

https://isu.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_cTPI6enwMomtXE

This study was approved by the Idaho State University's Institutional Review Board (IRB-FY2023-61) on 10/28/2022.

Sincerely,

Daisy Zhaoxuan Zhou, M.S., NCC
she/hers
Doctoral Candidate
Counselor Education and Counseling
Idaho State University

CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE: Email is not a confidential form of communication. This communication is for the sole use of the intended recipient and may contain confidential or privileged information. Any unauthorized review, disclosure, distribution, or other use of this email is prohibited. If you received this email in error, please notify the sender, and destroy all copies of the original message.

Appendix B

Research Project Invitation Email

Subject Line: Exploring the Teaching Experience in the Master's-Level Research Course

Dear Dr. [RECIPIENT LAST NAME],

My name is Daisy Zhaoxuan Zhou, and I am a doctoral candidate in Counselor Education and Counseling at Idaho State University. I am currently studying *beginning counselor educators' teaching experiences in the master's-level research and program evaluation class* as part of my dissertation requirement for my Ph.D. The purpose of my study is to understand how new counselor educators encounter and make meaning of the teaching experiences in the master's-level research class. It might further facilitate master's-level students' researcher identities and promote evidence-based counseling practice among practitioners.

I remember you sharing perspectives on providing research training in counseling at the 2022 AARC conference. Impressed by your passion and insights, I feel inspired and motivated to conduct this research. I wanted to contact you to see if you would like to participate in my study and if you know any colleagues who might be interested.

Eligibility criteria for this study included:

- (a) the participant holds a doctoral degree from a CACREP-accredited program,
- (b) the participant subjectively identifies themselves as a counselor educator and have been working full-timely in a CACREP-accredited program after receiving the doctoral degree,
- (c) the participant taught/teaches the master's-level research and program evaluation course as a pre-tenured (tenure-track position) counseling faculty,
- (d) the participant has been a full-time counselor educator for more than two years and has not been a full-time counselor educator for seven or more years, and
- (e) the participant must be willing to be interviewed and provide consent by completing and submitting the demographic questionnaire.

The survey link below will connect potential participants with a Qualtrics survey to collect basic screening information. This survey should take 5-10 minutes to complete. Once completed, I will review potential applicants, reach out to each with further instructions, and provide an informed consent document for eligible participants.

Participants in this study will be invited to two zoom-based interviews and two brief member-checking conversations. The first-round interview lasts 60-90 minutes, and the second-round one lasts 30-60 minutes. The member-checking meeting will be 30 minutes each. Participation in this study is entirely voluntary, and participants may withdraw from the study at any time. If selected for the study, every participant will receive a \$50 Amazon gift card.

If you are interested in participating in this study or have further questions, please contact me at zhaoxuanzhou@isu.edu. You may also contact my dissertation committee chair, Dr. Steve Moody, at stevemoody@isu.edu. If you know additional counselor educators who have taught or

are teaching the master's-level research class, please feel free to forward this information to them. I appreciate your support and allyship.

https://isu.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_cTPI6enwMomtXE

This study was approved by the Idaho State University's Institutional Review Board (IRB-FY2023-61) on 10/28/2022.

Sincerely,

Daisy Zhaoxuan Zhou, M.S., NCC
she/hers
Doctoral Candidate
Counselor Education and Counseling
Idaho State University

CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE: Email is not a confidential form of communication. This communication is for the sole use of the intended recipient and may contain confidential or privileged information. Any unauthorized review, disclosure, distribution, or other use of this email is prohibited. If you received this email in error, please notify the sender, and destroy all copies of the original message.

Appendix C

Informed Consent

Dear Potential Participant:

The purpose of this study is to understand how beginning counselor educators encounter and make meaning of the teaching experiences in the master's-level research and evaluation class and possibly identify strengths and gaps in research education in counseling. This study will consist of researchers and participants engaging in two semi-structured interviews on Zoom and two brief member-checking meetings. The first-round interview lasts 60-90 minutes, and the second-round one lasts 30-60 minutes. The member-checking meeting will be 30 minutes each. Interviews will focus on your experiences and perspectives on teaching the master's-level research class. I hope that information from this interview will contribute to a better understanding of your experiences and meaning-making processes.

The interviews with you will be video-recorded or audio-recorded through the Zoom platform. These interviews will be transcribed and stored in Box, a secure Cloud storage platform. The video recording will be deleted after double-checking the accuracy of the transcripts. The primary researcher (Daisy Zhou) will review the transcripts and de-identify the data by removing the names of people and institutions. Thus, the only personal identifying information that will be collected is your email address, and this information will be kept separate from other data as I move through the analysis procedures. The information you share will be anonymous and will only be used for research purposes. All information will be protected as required by the Idaho State University Institutional Review Board, which oversees all university research. No names will be included in any presentation or publication of the study findings, and you will be asked to provide a pseudonym in any depiction of this study data. After the study, the de-identified transcripts will be stored in Dr. Steve Moody's office cabinet and deleted after five years.

We may use or share your research information for future research studies. If we share your information with other researchers, we will not share any information that can directly identify you.

Participation is entirely **voluntary**, and you may withdraw at any time without adversely affecting your relationship with the investigator(s) or Idaho State University. Participation in this study is entirely voluntary, and participants may withdraw from the study at any time. If selected for the study, every participant will receive a \$50 Amazon gift card.

For further information, please contact primary researcher Daisy Zhaoxuan Zhou at 208-760-2357, email: zhaoxuanzhou@isu.edu. This study is supervised by my faculty advisor, Dr. Steven Moody, who can be reached via email at stevemoody@isu.edu or by phone at 208-282-2304.

I have read and understood this consent. After reading the consent, my questions were answered to my satisfaction. I hereby voluntarily agree to participate in this study:

- a) Yes
- b) No

Appendix D

Participant Selection Screening Demographics Questionnaire

- 1. What is your chosen pseudonym for participating in this study?**
- 2. What is your preferred email address for research communications?**
- 3. How do you describe your gender and sexual identities?**
 - a) Female
 - b) Male
 - c) Transgender
 - d) Non-binary
- 4. What is your age?**
- 5. How do you identify your race & ethnicity?**
- 6. Are there other cultural factors about you that you want me to know?**
- 7. Have you graduated from a CACREP-accredited doctoral program?**
 - a) Yes
 - b) No
- 8. Which academic year did you receive your doctoral degree?**
 - a) 2015-2016
 - b) 2016-2017
 - c) 2017-2018
 - d) 2018-2019
 - e) 2019-2020
 - f) 2020-2021
 - g) 2021-2022
 - h) None of the above.
- 9. What was your doctoral institution's Carnegie Classification when you graduated?**
 - a) Doctoral Universities – Very High Research Activity (R1)
 - b) Doctoral Universities – High Research Activity (R2)
 - c) Doctoral/Professional Universities (D/PU)
 - d) Other, please specify
- 10. Do you identify yourself as a counselor educator?**
 - a) Yes
 - b) No
- 11. Are you working as a full-time faculty in a CACREP-accredited program currently?**
 - a) Yes
 - b) No
- 12. What is your current institution's Carnegie Classification?**
 - a) Doctoral Universities – Very High Research Activity (R1)
 - b) Doctoral Universities – High Research Activity (R2)
 - c) Doctoral/Professional Universities (D/PU)
 - d) Master's Colleges and Universities
 - e) Baccalaureate Colleges
 - f) Other, please specify
- 13. In which academic year did you start to work as a full-time counseling faculty?**

- a) 2016-2017
- b) 2017-2018
- c) 2018-2019
- d) 2019-2020
- e) 2020-2021
- f) 2021-2022
- g) 2022-2023
- h) None of the above.

14. During which academic year(s) were/are you teaching the master's-level research class as a full-time faculty in a CACREP-accredited program (select all that apply)?

- a) 2016-2017
- b) 2017-2018
- c) 2018-2019
- d) 2019-2020
- e) 2020-2021
- f) 2021-2022
- g) 2022-2023
- h) None of the above.

15. During the academic year(s) when you were/are teaching the master's-level research class in the first two years as a full-time faculty, what was/is your institution's Carnegie Classification (select all that apply)?

- a) Doctoral Universities – Very High Research Activity (R1)
- b) Doctoral Universities – High Research Activity (R2)
- c) Doctoral/Professional Universities (D/PU)
- d) Master's Colleges and Universities
- e) Baccalaureate Colleges
- f) Other, please specify