

Discussion Threads For COUC 850

DB 1. Professional Identity

Michael Scoville

Jan 19, 2023 7:27pm|

Counselor identity is what separates counselors from other practices. It consists of our ethical-based practices, promoting growth and advocacy for the counseling profession and our clients. I believe that counselor identity matters because no two people are the same. We all need to identify as something, and a general idea of what a counselor should look like will help. Our accreditation body's professional counseling identity section of the standards reflects counselor identity. The counselor's identity is developed from a counselor's eight common core areas. These core areas are a professional counselor's orientation and ethical practices, social and cultural diversity training, human and growth development, career development, counseling and helping relationships, group counseling and work, assessment and testing, and research and development (CACREP, 2016). There is a need for a professional, generally recognized, and accepted national organization to represent counselors, such as the ACA. It allows for a more organized way to advocate for counselors. However, there are many forms of counseling, and each area feels more critical, creating a divide within.

Keeping the profession separated will give less chance for growth in counseling. Understanding the struggles of professional counselor organizations in the past should give counselors a reason to think about joining together, united to become stronger (Chang & Barrio Minton, 2022). The use of standardizations in counseling will allow for universal licensure. Right now, each state has the right to create its own standards and licensure laws but creating a universal standard for licensure for counselors would allow counselors to practice under one set

of laws. Ethically this would protect the clients more efficiently because every counselor would practice under the same standards.

DB 2. Professional Advocacy

Michael Scoville

Jan 25, 2023 10:19pm

As a member of the American Counselor Association (ACA) and Rho Eta Nu Gamma (REGN) Chi Sigma Iota, I have seen firsthand the importance of advocacy for counselors and their clients. I believe counselor identity has deep roots in advocacy because we would not have the respect of our state and federal representatives or from other helping professions (Chang & Barrio Minton, 2022). I have served on the advocacy committee with RENG. I have written emails to my local senators and congressman regarding the Medicare bill that was recently passed, allowing counselors to now bill for Medicare.

I wrote these letters through the ACA advocacy page, where many other vital issues must be addressed for counselor advocacy.

I understand my counselor identity is essential when looking at advocacy because those I will contact have little to no knowledge of what counselors actually do, so we need to educate them on what we do and the importance of counseling as a profession (Chang & Barrio Minton, 2020). If we go about our lives without advocating for our profession or those we counsel, we will continue to be looked down upon and ignored. During my trip to the All-Ohio Counselors Conference, sponsored by the Ohio Counseling Association, I heard and talked with two lobbyists in a diversity committee meeting.

They explained how laws are being passed with little to no resistance from the opposition of specific bills, as the only voices being heard are the minorities fighting for the bills and

change. As it was stated, the squeaky wheel gets the grease. If we sit back and let laws be passed that deny our rights as counselors to treat people, then shame on us. We must stand up and fight for our rights through advocacy and joining associations fighting for our identity. Have a safe and blessed week.

DB 3. Leadership in Counselor Education Programs

[Michael Scoville](#)

Feb 2, 2023 7:50pm

One possible way to creatively promote leadership and advocacy would be to incorporate education on advocacy for the profession and clients in the course syllabus. Teaching introductory letter writing and exploring other ways they may be able to advocate for their clients, students, community, and profession to develop a better understanding of the importance of advocacy. The class will require students to become more involved in a state and national-accredited organization, such as the American Counseling Association (ACA), which has an advocacy division with which they can get involved. For an assignment, that will be required to search for a topic of interest and get involved with the ACA in advocating for that topic.

Help them research the topic to understand why it is essential to the profession to use for the letter they will write to the state or federal legislature, who would need to understand why they are advocating for the issue. Most politicians will either respond personally to the letter or have a cabinet member respond. That response would then be submitted along with the original letter written for the assignment to be graded. CACREP emphasizes that educators be involved in professional organizations to lead by example (Chang & Barrio Minton, 2022). The professor will explain personal involvement in the organization, offices held, and committees, along with why advocacy is important to her.

Next, the class will practice advocating by dividing the class into small groups. Each group chooses a leader for the week. In the first two days, they will pick a topic and an advocating style and create a 10-minute presentation. The leader will advocate to the rest of the class. Each week a new leader is chosen until all have a turn as the leader and advocate on a different subject using a different style. This will allow them to become familiar with more than one style. Some barriers to this idea are that it would work well for a conventional style class. It would be more difficult in an online classroom setting.

Another barrier may be that certain groups may be better at this than others, and some groups may not want to partake because they feel they need to be better at presenting. Then there may need to be more time for the class to have every student be a leader, depending on the class size. The students would gain a long-term education in advocacy by having hands-on practice advocating through mock advocating. As for short-term results, they will have a chance to see what a leader can do when it comes to advocating and leading the group. Thank you, and God bless.

DB 4. Leadership in Supervision

[Michael Scoville](#)

Feb 7, 2023 8:57pm

During my internship and practicum, I discovered a need for supervisor training at the counseling center where I am employed. I have also learned that the state only requires 24 hours of training in supervision to take the supervision license, besides all the other requirements. I discovered this as I was talking with my supervisor and asked him which supervision model he used, and he looked at me like I was crazy for asking such a question. He told me he did not have one and was never taught this; I was shocked by how little a supervisor needs in supervision

education. In my Teaching and supervision class, I was taught the importance of training supervisors, but I also learned that this was common in many states.

I agree with the CACREP standards and requirements of the doctorate core competencies and the importance of supervision training (Chang & Barrio Minton, 2020). Because supervisors play such a vital role as gatekeepers during the training of counselors and counselor identity, a well-trained supervisor is essential to the profession. I was shocked to hear about the state's need for leadership development requirements. Although counselors are mentors and most of their training comes from gaining knowledge from their supervisors, the knowledge that their supervisors have should be from academic knowledge also.

As a future leader, educator, and advocate for the counseling profession, I will advocate for my state and counseling center for more stringent requirements and training for supervisors. Although my state already requires a CACREP-accredited education for counselors, they need more supervision requirements. We are gatekeepers as leaders, educators, and advocates of our profession. As gatekeepers, we must protect clients and the profession from ill-equipped counselors from moving forward. Thank you, and God bless.

DB 5. Best Practices through Advocacy and Leadership

[Michael Scoville](#)

Feb 21, 2023 8:26pm

As counselor educators, it is already difficult enough to prepare practical and yet, entertaining courses for our students to get the most out of them. We aim to make healthy and well-developed counselors as they prepare to be counselors. One strategy I would like to implement in my development of future counselors is to remember the importance of research and utilizing best practices when placed into a position of publish or perish, as some institutions

deem necessary (Chang & Barrio Minton, 2022). Strategy two is to teach the students the importance of advocacy for the profession and how research is needed to present evidence supporting their advocacy topic. Strategy three will be to develop a system to evaluate the success of my teaching of research, advocacy, and the need to counsel others effectively and ensure that they are balanced through assessments. With all this in mind, the best practice is working to achieve the best possible solution to any problems you may be confronted with. Thank you, and God bless.

References

Chang, C. Y., & Barrio Minton, C. A., (2022). Professional counseling excellence through leadership and advocacy. 2nd Ed. Routledge.

The Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Education Programs (CACREP). (2016). *2016 CACREP standards*.

<https://www.cacrep.org/section-2-professionalcounseling-identity>Links to an external site..