Learning to Teach: Teaching Internships in Counselor Education and Supervision

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In an effort to ensure the efficacy of preparing emerging counselors in the field, CACREP standards require that by 2013 all core faculty at accredited universities have a doctorate in Counselor Education and Supervision. However, literature suggests that a disparity may exist in the preparation of counselor educators and the actual responsibilities of faculty members. As such, the present study investigated CACREP-accredited doctoral programs’ preparation of students to teach from the perspective of both students and program coordinators. Results support a didactic course in teaching and a co-teaching internship to help doctoral students learn to develop course materials, manage classroom behavior, and develop a teaching style and philosophy. Recommendations for effective counselor education training practices are provided.

Keywords: counselor education, faculty, CACREP, doctoral students, teaching

The field of counselor education continues to grow and with the rise in counseling programs there is an increased need for doctoral level counselor educators. In support of this need, the 2009 Council on Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) standards require that by 2013 all new core faculty have a doctorate in Counselor Education and Supervision (CES), since they are trained to teach, conduct research, and contribute service to the counseling profession (Sears & Davis, 2003). The training mission of CACREP-accredited CES doctoral programs meets the growing interest in reform for graduate education and the needs of a changing academy (Austin & Wulff, 2004).

An examination of the literature raises curiosity about the consistency between graduate preparation and the roles and responsibilities of faculty members. For example, faculty members spend more than half their time on teaching (Davis, Levitt, McGlothlin, & Hill, 2006; Golde & Dore, 2001), yet research is often the dominant focus of doctoral-level training. This leaves graduates better prepared for the role of researcher and less prepared for the role of teacher (Golde & Dore, 2001; Heppner & Johnston, 1994; Orr, Hall, & Hulse-Killacky, 2008). For example, Rogers, Gill-Wigal, Harrigan, and Abbey-Hines (1998) found that counseling faculty ranked experience in the area of teaching higher than publication experience in the faculty selection process. The focus on research in doctoral preparation appears contrary to what programs want in faculty—that is, well-rounded faculty who are prepared to teach, conduct research, and provide service to their institution, profession, and community.

According to Burke (2001), doctoral programs typically prepare students for careers at research institutions, and in doing so offer graduate fellowships, assistantships, and other training opportunities in research. This traditional model emphasizes research preparation while paying little attention to other faculty responsibilities like teaching (Rogers et al., 1998; Wulff, Austin, Nyquist, & Sprague, 2004). Consequently, many new faculty members lack didactic and hands-on training in teaching. Heppner (1994) supports this notion and found few graduate programs had systematic curricular experiences designed to prepare graduate students to teach, and those that did typically involved two to three days of seminar-based instruction that emphasized topics like grading and academic dishonesty. Without formal curricular experiences designed to train teachers, doctoral students who plan to enter a career in academia are too often not receiving training in the basic aspects of how to teach. As a result, new faculty are learning to teach during their first year while simultaneously adapting to a new professional environment, and in some cases developing a research agenda (Berberet, 2008; Burke, 2001).

A few studies that examined early experiences of new assistant professors have been identified in the literature. In a qualitative study by Magnuson, Black, and Lahman (2006), new assistant professors in counselor education were
interviewed about their first three years as academicians. One participant described feeling “competent clinically,” but “completely ill prepared” for the role of counselor educator (p. 176). Wulff et al. (2004) investigated how graduate students’ experiences contributed to their development as educators and the types of training that most effectively prepared them for the professoriate. Their findings underscored a lack of “systematic feedback and mentoring” (Wulff et al., p. 62) in graduate students’ development as educators. Students reported their departments did not prepare them for the role of educator or provide feedback on their teaching skills. For students who did receive feedback, it was not “thorough or carefully designed to help them grow as teachers” (Wulff et al., p. 62). Consequently, participants relied on formal and informal feedback from students as well as their students’ grades to identify their most effective teaching strategies (Wulff et al.).

Doctoral students sometimes gain experience as teaching assistants (TA), yet these experiences may not adequately prepare them for the activities necessary for successful faculty careers. Although TA opportunities can help graduate students learn how to deliver a lecture and evaluate student work, these assistantships often serve as “mechanisms for financial aid and provide a labor pool of junior instructors for the university” (Golde & Dore, 2001, p. 25). According to Fagen and Suedkamp Wells (2004), “Teaching assistants are thrown into teaching environments in a sink-or-swim manner. No advice, preparation, or supervision is given” (p. 84). Therefore, one cannot assume that teaching assistantships are the answer to preparing doctoral students for the professoriate.

Without formal curriculum designed to train teachers, students who plan to enter a career in academia lack training in important aspects of teaching such as developing a teaching philosophy, incorporating information technology into the classroom, and creating inclusive classroom environments (Golde & Dore, 2001). This lack of training prevents aspiring faculty from truly understanding the art of teaching; that is, guiding students to new levels of understanding rather than standing in front of the room and lecturing (Wulff et al., 2004).

Researchers suggest that graduate students who experience progressively challenging teaching roles with faculty supervision benefit most from their graduate teaching experiences (Wulff et al., 2004), yet less than 50% of graduate students receive appropriate training before they enter the academy and they lack appropriate supervision to help enhance their teaching skills (Fagen & Suedkamp Wells, 2004). Accordingly, recommendations to graduate programs to provide greater opportunities for students to develop teaching skills have been proposed. One such opportunity is the teaching internship, which can help broaden the program emphasis beyond that of research to better prepare students for jobs in academia (Nerad, Aanerud, & Cerny, 2004).

According to Burke (2001), requiring a teaching internship for doctoral students can lead to a powerful climate change in academe that benefits graduate students, their doctoral programs, their institutions, and higher education as a whole. Burke contends that adding an elective or a required course in teaching is not enough. Rather, doctoral programs should provide students with varied teaching opportunities that become increasingly more demanding, require more responsibility, and allow for activities including but not limited to advisement and the development of a teaching philosophy (Wulff & Austin, 2004). It is important to note that adding a teaching internship is not intended to deemphasize the importance of research; rather, doctoral training for the professoriate should be strengthened to include emphasis on the most time-consuming activity of a professor—teaching.

Rationale for the Study

CACREP-accredited doctoral programs have responded to the growing interest in reform in graduate education by increasing their emphasis on training the next generation of faculty to teach. Zimpfer et al. (1997) reported that counselor education doctoral programs rated instructional and co-teaching activities as highly important student activities, yet a description of such teaching activities and an investigation of their effectiveness was not provided. According to CACREP Doctoral Standard III.B,

Doctoral students are required to complete doctoral-level counseling internships that total a minimum of 600 clock hours. The 600 hours include supervised experiences in counselor education and supervision (e.g., clinical practice, research, teaching). The internship includes most of the activities of a regularly employed professional in the setting. The 600 hours may be allocated at the discretion of the doctoral advisor and the student on the basis of experience and training. (CACREP, 2009, p. 54; emphasis added)
This standard, however, does not specifically describe or offer suggestions on how doctoral programs should train their students to teach or how a teaching internship should be developed and implemented. CACREP Standard II.B.2 also mandates students should be provided with opportunities to “develop collaborative relationships with program faculty in teaching, supervision, research, professional writing, and service to the profession and the public” (CACREP, 2009, p. 53l; emphasis added). Finally, as stated in the “Doctoral Learning Outcomes” section of the 2009 CACREP Standards, graduates should be knowledgeable about theory and methods related to teaching and they should have developed their own philosophy of teaching.

Our interest in this topic grew out of our experiences learning to teach at the graduate level. The first author learned to teach by co-teaching with a faculty member when she was a doctoral student, even though her program did not have a formal teaching internship. The faculty member then required doctoral advisees to complete a formal teaching internship until the time her program made the decision that all counselor education doctoral students were required to complete a didactic course on teaching as well as complete a teaching internship. The second author completed a didactic course as part of her doctoral program, and did her teaching internship with the first author. Our basic assumption going into the study was that completing a teaching internship is important in helping doctoral students become competent teachers. We discussed our assumptions and thoughts about the teaching experiences of CES students before and during the current study.

A review of the counseling literature uncovered no research related to how doctoral students in counselor education are being trained to teach in accordance with CACREP standards. Thus, CES students who plan to spend a significant portion of their academic careers teaching are not able to access information that describes how CES graduates are best prepared to teach, specifically what works and what does not work from the perspectives of faculty and other students. To address this gap in the literature, we conducted a preliminary study to answer the following research questions: (a) How are doctoral programs in counselor education training their CES students to teach? And, (b) What are the experiences of CES students who have completed a teaching internship?

**Methodology**

We used both quantitative and qualitative questions to answer the research questions. We collected descriptive data to investigate how counselor education programs are training CES students to teach and used general qualitative inquiry to learn about the teaching internship experiences of CES students. Our study was conducted in two phases. In Phase 1, we surveyed CES professors who were doctoral coordinators about the training their programs provide to doctoral students with regard to teaching. In Phase 2 we surveyed CES students who were completing or had recently completed their teaching internship. We could not find an appropriate survey for our study, so we developed questions for both phases of the study based on our review of the literature on teaching at the collegiate level.

For Phase 1 of the study, we sent email surveys to the doctoral coordinators for all CACREP-accredited CES programs. The survey, which included the language from CACREP (2009) Doctoral Standard III.B, consisted of the following questions: (a) How many doctoral students are accepted into your program each year? (b) What is the main focus of your program (i.e., train faculty, train researchers, train supervisors and practitioners)? (c) How does your program meet CACREP Doctoral Standard II.B? (d) Does your program offer or require a didactic teaching course? (e) Does your program offer or require a teaching internship? And, (f) What other opportunities does your program offer that allow doctoral students to gain teaching experience? At the time we collected data there were 44 CACREP accredited doctoral programs, and despite repeated contacts with program coordinators encouraging their participation, we received responses from only 16 doctoral coordinators (36% response rate).

For Phase 2, we sent email surveys containing open-ended questions to the ten doctoral coordinators who responded that their programs offered a teaching internship—not all programs offered a teaching internship—asking them to forward the survey to students currently completing or who had completed their teaching internship. Fourteen students responded and all questions were answered. The student survey noted we were looking specifically at the teaching internship experience, not teaching assistant experiences, and asked questions about (a) teaching experiences prior to the doctoral teaching internship, (b) what students appreciated most about the teaching internship, (c) what they found most and least helpful about the teaching internship, (d) if they had a separate didactic course related to teaching, what was most and
least helpful about the course, (e) what would they have liked to have known before they started the teaching internship/co-teaching experience, and (f) how prepared they felt to teach independently after completing the teaching internship?

Results

CES program coordinators provided commentary on the status of the teaching internship at their institution (Phase 1), and doctoral students on their experiences with the teaching internship (Phase 2).

Phase 1: Program Coordinator Responses

Coordinators for the 16 programs noted they typically accepted six CES students a year. With regard to the main focus of the program (i.e., train faculty, train supervisors and practitioners, train researchers), 10 coordinators noted their program focused on training counselor education faculty, one program emphasized training of counselor education faculty as well as training of supervisors and practitioners, one program focused exclusively on training supervisors and practitioners, and four programs had an equal balance between all three areas.

With regard to how programs met the CACREP standard regarding teaching, the responses were varied with 15 of 16 participants responding to this question. Three coordinators noted their programs required no teaching experience as part of doctoral training. Of these, two noted that while their programs did not require a teaching experience most CES students co-taught a course with a faculty member. Nine coordinators said their students must complete a formal teaching internship, which typically entailed teaching a master’s level lecture course with a program faculty member. Of the programs that required a teaching internship, eight also required that students complete a didactic course on college teaching. Four coordinators noted they offered the course on teaching in their department, and four participants noted the required teaching course was offered outside of their department. When asked what other opportunities their programs offered for CES students to gain additional teaching experience, eight coordinators responded that their students had the opportunity to teach an undergraduate course independently, three programs provided opportunities for students to lead workshops, and two programs provided opportunities for CES students to teach master’s level courses independently.

Phase 2: Experiences of CES Student Respondents Who Completed the Teaching Internship

As noted, 14 doctoral students responded to Phase 2 of the study. They were asked to answer questions about their experiences prior to, during, and following their teaching internship. Eight respondents reported they had some level of teaching experience prior to their doctoral programs, which included teaching at the K–12, undergraduate, and master’s level. Following the principles of the constant comparative method of analysis (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), we reviewed and coded the responses to the remaining eight questions independently and placed them in categories. Then we met to discuss our independent categories until we came to consensus about the categories’ titles and meanings.

We took several steps to verify our findings. First, we used multiple participants as a form of data triangulation (Creswell, 2007; Patton 2002). Second, we analyzed the data independently and then together, which is a form of investigator triangulation (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Patton, 2002). We also revisited participant responses when necessary throughout the analysis process, which provided us with opportunities to remain aware of potential research biases as well as to support or refute our categories. Finally, we used “thick description” (i.e., quotes) from the participants to add detail to their experiences (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Based on our analysis, responses emerged in the following four categories: (a) most and least helpful aspects of the teaching internship, (b) most and least helpful aspects of the didactic course on teaching, (c) what students should know before starting their teaching internship, and (d) how prepared students felt to teach independently. Responses will be described in detail, including exemplary quotes from the participants.

Most and least helpful aspects of the teaching internship. According to one respondent, the teaching internship is an opportunity for doctoral students to observe, model, and collaborate with “trusted and experienced” professors in preparation for their careers as counselor educators. Of the 14 doctoral students who responded, only one person wrote that the teaching experience was not helpful. The remaining respondents appreciated the support and guidance provided by the professors with whom they taught, which according to one respondent helped guide the student through “the rough spots” and improved his/her teaching skills. One respondent wrote, “I appreciated working closely with my supervisor
to ensure that I had the support necessary to do the job right.” Another respondent shared that support and guidance were received through “bouncing ideas and feelings off” professors and collaboration on curriculum development and leading class discussions.

Respondents also appreciated the autonomy fostered by co-instruction opportunities, which allowed them to “have control over what assignments were being given.” One respondent underscored the importance of co-creating course syllabi and being involved with “in-class demonstrations and mini-lectures.” The flexibility and freedom to generate course curriculum and relevant materials encouraged the development of teaching philosophies and styles, both of which are essential to effective pedagogy. Another respondent stated, “My professor allowed me to choose half of the lectures and create my own materials for the class. I felt a sense of independence and empowerment as a co-instructor.”

Weekly teaching internship meetings where doctoral students and a professor met either individually or in a group to discuss ideas and concerns related to the teaching internship were described as beneficial. Respondents appreciated sharing ideas and hearing “strengths and areas of improvement” with regard to their teaching competencies. One respondent noted “meeting with the instructor of record to co-plan for [class]… helped me to deal with different problems that arose…[as well as] having trust and confidence placed in my abilities and me.”

Having a sense of being supervised too closely by the faculty co-instructor, however, was described by a few respondents as unhelpful, as the presence of the professor “made it hard to establish rapport and authority with students.” Feelings of frustration arose for one respondent when students would bypass the doctoral student and go directly to the faculty member of record “when it came to issues of grades, or syllabus-dictated course requirements.”

Additionally, although the majority of respondents viewed professors as experienced and excellent role models, several observed faculty who “did not model successful teaching strategies” or did not have a mastery of the material. One respondent stated, “Having to meet in a tiered supervision group with a professor who did not understand the unique aspects of the school counseling setting was not helpful.”

The “hands-on” training approach of the teaching internship was described as a valuable component of the experience as it promoted doctoral students’ observation and participation in realistic roles and responsibilities of professors. One respondent indicated, “I really got to experience how much prep work goes into teaching.” Others noted the opportunity “to teach a variety of courses” and “interact with different students” helped strengthen their abilities to reach and teach “all types of thinkers.” Some participants reported, however, that they felt unprepared for the “hands-on” approach, and found a number of characteristics of the teaching internship unhelpful. For example, one respondent noted, “prior knowledge of the level of preparation needed to teach a subject would have been helpful.” Another respondent struggled with “not knowing the level of competence of the students ahead of time,” and a third respondent found it “challenging to teach some students who were very unengaged in the course.”

Most and least helpful aspects of the didactic teaching course. Most graduate student respondents found their didactic course on teaching helpful in preparing them to teach. In particular, the didactic course provided opportunities for doctoral students to develop syllabi, exams, and grading rubrics, as well as receive feedback from professors and classmates. One respondent wrote,

Every assignment and class meeting was valuable. Assignments included writing a syllabus from start to finish and revising it after receiving feedback, keeping a journal on relevant topics (philosophy of teaching and learning, dealing with problems from students or other situations, our own biases), writing a sample test utilizing different types of test items, sharing and critiquing a video of us teaching, and creating a teaching portfolio that includes our philosophy of teaching, the things we created, and how we would evaluate students and ourselves.

Another respondent stated that the course on teaching required that respondents read the text they would be teaching the semester prior to teaching. This assignment, as described by the respondent, was “helpful in developing and receiving feedback on a tentative syllabus and lesson plans.” Respondents also indicated they enjoyed the opportunity to interact with other doctoral students, allowing for the comparison of “experiences” and acquisition of “new ideas.” Overall, these didactic experiences increased respondents’ knowledge of the course content, and furthered the development of their basic teaching skills and overall teaching philosophies.
Although many respondents found the didactic component of the teaching internship helpful, a few respondents shared that the course overemphasized the development of lesson plans. One respondent noted, “it was least helpful to develop individual lesson plans when we would be co-teaching.” The respondent continued with this recommendation: “it would have been more useful to develop lesson plans with our co-instructor, instead of having to merge and blend them together the first day of class.” One respondent shared his dislike for the course’s lack of emphasis on actual teaching. Two other respondents described the quality of course materials and the course curriculum as not beneficial. One respondent noted, “…a lot of the course was review, and for the parts that were new, I think I could have just written a paper based on the book,” and a second respondent identified her readings for the course as unhelpful.

What students should know before starting their teaching internship. Respondents provided various suggestions to future students with regard to what they should know before beginning the teaching internship. Mentorship was described as an important area of support for graduate students in counselor education. For those students who can choose the professor with whom they will teach, one respondent underscored the importance of “choosing a professor whose style you value” rather than choosing a particular course only based on interest. Furthermore, it is beneficial to consider “which ‘profs’ were the best teachers” and to “try to incorporate the successful strategies employed by your favorite teachers.” This comment speaks to the importance of faculty modeling effective teaching strategies to teaching interns. Another respondent provided a suggestion that emphasized the value of supervision:

Use your mentor as a sounding board, especially if you have never taught before. Rarely will you be presented with an issue in your class with which your supervisor has not had prior experience. Pay attention to the way effective professors do business.

Structured supervision also was indicated as an important area of interest. For graduate students who might not have a formal teaching supervision experience in place, one respondent advised, “Find out with whom they can consult formally or informally. Do not try to teach in a vacuum, especially if they are new to teaching…form an informal peer supervision group or seek outside supervision from another knowledgeable source.”

In addition, classroom management also was identified as a practical area that graduate students should know before beginning their teaching internship. Responses included dealing with “student issues,” “classroom dynamics,” and engaging “the difficult-to-teach student.” A few respondents commented on the importance of understanding and using effective ways to interact with students. For example, one respondent stated, “make sure you pay attention to how people react to being challenged…or how people go about disagreeing…[since] not everyone responds to criticism or being challenged in the same way.” Another respondent underscored the value of having structure in the classroom, noting: “It is easier to be ruthlessly rigid and demanding at first and then loosen the reins toward the end of the semester than it is to be lax in enforcing grading or class rules and then try to put the hammer down at the end of the semester.” This respondent also recommended that teaching interns “set the tone from the start” of the course.

Finally, a few respondents recommended doctoral students understand the time, dedication, and competence required to develop course materials and integrate technology into the curriculum. For example, one respondent suggested doctoral students should know the “most professional issues relevant to the course; how to develop a syllabus; and how to create assignments that truly measure knowledge gained by students.” One respondent proposed that doctoral students plan “to double their estimated time of preparation and to try to gain competence in the use of technology like ANGEL and WEBCT,” which are computerized course management systems.

How prepared students felt to teach independently. Overall, respondents described the teaching internship as an essential component in preparing them to teach independently. Emphasis was placed on the importance of didactic training and the co-teaching experience in addition to teaching assistantship opportunities. One respondent noted, “The teaching internship is so essential for counselor educators…and this means a structured course or practicum beyond just being a teaching assistant!” Co-teaching experiences allowed students to gain knowledge of course material as well as skills to manage the classroom, both of which were invaluable to their training. One respondent noted the value of having a didactic course and teaching internship as part of his training: “I believe that my internship alone did not 100% prepare me to teach independently. I think that internship, the class on college teaching and other co-teaching experiences TOGETHER have helped me feel prepared to teach.” After completing the teaching internship, one person indicated she was hired by her department as an instructor for a master’s level course, which helped her gain additional experience and
earn extra income during her doctoral studies.

Discussion

Findings from Phase 1 of the study show the majority of faculty respondents, all from CACREP-accredited CES programs, focused on training doctoral students to become faculty with particular emphasis on teaching, research, and service. Given that the master’s degree is the professional-level degree in counselor education, it seems appropriate that doctoral programs focus on training future faculty to teach. The majority of participants noted they were providing some level of teaching opportunities to CES students even if it was not offered in a formalized and systematic way. Doctoral coordinators for three programs did not respond to this question, and three noted they did not require students to complete any kind of teaching experience despite teaching being noted as an important element of doctoral training in the CACREP standards. Nine programs required students to complete a formal teaching internship, typically co-teaching a master’s-level counseling course with a counselor education faculty member, and of those programs eight required students to complete a didactic course on teaching. Additional training experiences offered to CES students included teaching undergraduate or graduate courses independently and leading workshops.

As noted earlier, results from our analysis of the student responses (Phase 2 of the study) provided information on the most and least helpful aspects of the teaching internship and the didactic teaching course, as well as what students should know before starting their teaching internship. Mentorship, support and guidance from faculty and peers, and weekly supervision were helpful aspects of the teaching internship. Teaching supervision that was too intensive and working with weak role models of quality teaching were unhelpful aspects of the teaching internship. Although most respondents found the didactic teaching course to be helpful, a few respondents expressed concern over the heavy focus on developing lesson plans (when they were not teaching a course yet) and the lack of actual teaching experience in the course. As a result, respondents recommended that other students be selective about with whom students complete their teaching internship, focusing on the instructor rather than the course content; make full use of the supervision provided by the faculty mentor as well as peer support; learn good classroom management skills; and be aware of the amount of time and energy required to develop and teach a course. All these recommendations are made possible through a didactic teaching course coupled with hands-on teaching experience.

Students respondents also described how prepared they felt to teach independently. Overall, the teaching internship, beyond being a teaching assistant, was very important in helping them feel prepared to teach independently since respondents learned both how to present content and manage the classroom elements of teaching.

Findings from our study are contrary to Wulff et al. (2004) and Fagan and Suedkamp Wells (2004), who found that doctoral students who wanted to become faculty reported they did not receive adequate orientation, preparation, or training to enter the classroom as teachers. Although the comparative research examined experiences across many disciplines and was not primarily focused on counselors, it is the only literature that could be located relevant to the current topic. It appears that students enrolled in CES programs that include a teaching internship requirement, if not requiring both a didactic course and the internship, felt supported as they learned to teach and believed they were well prepared to teach independently. Wulff et al. also suggested that students engage in teaching experiences that are progressively more challenging, moving from some level of teaching observation or a didactic course to then co-teaching with faculty, and then teaching independently, which happened for a number of the doctoral participants in our CES study.

Our findings support Heppner’s (1994) assertion that providing graduate students (five psychology students in this case) with the opportunity to engage in a teaching practicum or internship experience significantly increased their knowledge about teaching as well as teaching self-efficacy. Participants in Heppner’s study stated that receiving feedback from faculty co-instructors and peers as well as sharing ideas with their peers was particularly helpful, which is similar to our findings.

Limitations and Implications

As with all research, this study has limitations. Because of the preliminary nature of the study and the relatively low response rate for Phase 1, it is not possible to generalize the findings to all CACREP-accredited CES programs or to all
counselor education doctoral programs. In addition, our findings reflect research institutions that train counselor education doctoral students. Therefore, caution should be used in interpreting our findings. Limitations for Phase 2 could include some degree of researcher bias since the authors initially had a student-professor relationship and worked together in a teaching internship, but we took the steps described above to ensure trustworthiness and attend to potential biases.

Despite these limitations, there are several implications that arise from our findings. First, CES programs would benefit from developing a systematic process for training doctoral students to teach. Having a required process is not only important in terms of meeting the CACREP standards, but also has an important influence on how we train future generations of master’s-level counselors. This process could include having students complete a didactic course on teaching, preferably offered within the department, and either simultaneously and sequentially completing a co-teaching internship with a faculty member.

Based on the research and our findings, it seems most effective to have doctoral students select the faculty member with whom they want to co-teach and that they receive consistent supervision. Burke (2001) takes the process even further, recommending that doctoral students complete a year long teaching internship that would include teaching two courses a semester and being involved in departmental meetings where curricular issues are discussed, as well as advising students. For specifics on a model designed to meet the CACREP standards for training counselor education doctoral students on how to teach, see Orr et al. (2008), who developed the collaborative teaching teams (CTT) model to help CES students gain experience and increase their sense of competence in teaching.

During the teaching internship students should be provided with formal opportunities to interact with other doctoral students completing their teaching internship, preferably in a weekly group setting. Again, our findings and existing research support the idea that peer support and critique is as important, if not more important, to doctoral students as they learn to become effective and confident teachers. Respondents benefitted from seeing what their colleagues did in similar teaching situations and imagining how they might handle a challenge that a doctoral peer was facing.

Lastly, counselor education programs can help doctoral students broaden their definition of teaching to include community and conference presentations, workshops, and other public speaking opportunities where CES students can use their counseling and teaching skills to educate others. Teacher training also should include specific content about how to assess and handle classroom situations where students may have committed academic misconduct or may be impaired in some way and what campus resources exist to help faculty and students navigate these challenging situations, including how codes of ethics and university policies and procedures apply in the classroom.

As Heppner and Johnston (1994) stated, “the development of excellent teaching skills involves continuous learning, a lifelong process...Given the complexity of the skills required for outstanding teaching, it is surprising that most faculty members have not had formal training in teaching” (p. 492). By providing the same level of focus and attention to teaching in CES programs that we do to research, we can help future CES faculty increase their level of competence and self-efficacy as counselor educators, thus effecting positive change in the classrooms of counselor education master’s programs across the country where our graduates are hired to teach. Our provision of quality and comprehensive doctoral-level education also responds to the call for reform for graduate education, particularly in preparing future faculty members to meet the needs of a changing academy.

References


