

Pre-Intensive Reflective Journal

Brandon Waggoner

Liberty University



Pre-Intensive Reflective Journal

Being an educator myself in the aviation maintenance field, this assignment was incredibly beneficial for my teaching. Nearly every chapter of these two books were filled with nuggets that I could take into the classroom with me. Reflecting on higher education with a co-worker, it was interesting to note how many disciplines have teachers who are experts in their field, but not education. Knowing now that merely knowing content is not enough for learning, we as educators must help students know how to learn. The following is a collection of the topics learned through this assignment.

Roles and Responsibilities Related to Educating Counselors

In reading both of these texts, my excitement for this content grew with each insight gained. While there is a heavy burden placed on educators, especially counselor educators, there can be much satisfaction as well as creativity in this endeavor. In determining the roles and responsibilities in educating counselors, there needs to be a type of mindset shift in how I have viewed education in the past. A teacher should not be separate from their teaching. Teaching should not come from fear, but from a place of curiosity, confidence, and enthusiasm for one's subject (W, 171). In my own teaching, I can tend to blame the student for lack of motivation or work put into the subject. However, there are many strategies that can facilitate learning and fulfill the roles of counselor education as well as education in general.

Counselor educators should emphasize “warm” syllabi in order to build strong rapport which is critical for modeling counseling (W, 15). Much of the outflow in teaching is modeling the experiences that will elicit emotion and solidify learning. Educators can also focus on strong relationships with students such as having an attributional style, being aware of ego depletion,

and mastering relationship styles (W, 127). However, boundaries must also be maintained with avoiding “friendships” with students such as on social media (W, 130). Ways to facilitate this solidifying of learning are to include effective teaching through good preparation that focuses on using life as ways to gather examples of improving teaching counselors (W, 168). Goals for teaching should be developing lifelong learning in students and giving them skills to continue to learn and a desire for this outcome (M, 8). This role of model and guide leads to specific structure and methods for counselor education.

Pedagogy and Teaching Methods Relevant to Counselor Education

It was interesting to learn the difference between pedagogy and andragogy. The teaching that I do centers more on teaching adults. Adults learn differently than children. Even among adults, not everyone learns the same way. Therefore, having a choice on how to receive information can be a help to students (M, 12). By building upon a student’s past experience and knowledge, learning can be a more fulfilling process. Learning and thus teaching can be thought of as a fluid process which is just a contribution to a conversation. It is a continual journey that cannot be taken alone (W, 169).

Teaching is not a performance but an interaction between teacher and student (W, 28). Often, from a strictly lecture format, the focus is on improving performance rather than the interaction. Getting students to engage can be a struggle as well. However, a focus on the relationship can begin to break the impasse of difficult students. The student-instructor relationship is critical in engaging students in the learning process such as homework as well as encouraging student responsibility (W, 75). This can happen even within the lecture model. Lecture should include modeling counseling skills (W, 25). Lectures should also incorporate

“pedagogical content knowledge” which considers how students learn and adapts teaching to fulfill that (M, 61). With the lectures I have been doing in the maintenance field, the material would often bore the students. It became evident to not use too much material in a lecture. Avoiding “mental dazzle” will help, which causes students to not retain anything. Instead, it is wise to have a goal of getting across 3 or 4 points (M, 64). This takes the burden off of even having to cover all the content. Students can pick this up on their own if their interests are piqued and their desire to learn is fostered.

Models of Adult Developing and Learning

As stated earlier, it was impactful to think about the different ways in which adults learn as well as differences in individuals. People engage more if they find meaning in what they are doing (W, 20). Adult learners and graduate students, specifically, want to practice and apply not memorize facts (W, 28). I have found this to be the case with the students in the aviation maintenance department in which I teach. Students often complain about lecture and report that they learn much more in projects. Counselor education is in the same realm. I remember learning much more in my internship than in most of my classes.

Students learn by doing as well as through emotional engagement in things they find meaningful (W, 51). Older adults who are learning counseling techniques match better with experiential learning than lectures and exams (W, 53). Thus, a counselor educator who is working with andragogy, should link past experiences with new learning. This can be accomplished through developing mindfulness in reading so that students can get the “big picture.” The SQ3R method can be used to allow students to dig deeper into the material (M, 32).

As teachers, we are not writing on blank slates. Instead, we are seeking to help students organize their existing thought structures and incorporate new dimensions and structures (M, 63). Despite these efforts, motivation can be an issue. Motivation can be impacted if they feel that there is a reasonable possibility of success and that the work is of value (M, 143).

Instructional and Curriculum Design, Delivery, and Evaluation Methods Relevant to Counselor Education

How a course is constructed and delivered can facilitate or hinder the above goals for learning in the student. There should be a constant evaluation of these aspects in order to gauge the desired outcomes. Without these factors, course material can become boring and uninteresting for students which creates an almost absence of learning. Many factors in this arena can be helpful in fostering a learning and engaging environment.

Just like in building rapport in the counseling process, setting the tone for the course on the first day is critical in how a student views the course (W, 17). If the instructor is excited about the material and can relate the topics to stories and experiences, this will model for the students how to view the material. This tone can also take the form of fostering discussions within the class. Facilitating discussions is critical yet challenging. It is important to avoid direct questions that have a right or wrong answer which can cause stress and risk of embarrassment for students. Instead, it is best to ask questions that ask how the student interacts with the materials (M, 44). Situated learning occurs when learning something happens within a specific context. When recalling the items learned, the context is recalled along with it (M, 203).

Evaluation of this learning process throughout a course can take several forms as well. Peer learning can be just as beneficial as teaching instruction. Teaching can be evaluated by

students through a take home quiz as well as through peer observation (W, 21). However, direct teacher involvement cannot be overlooked. Too often when I am grading or trying to help a student improve, it becomes a task of searching for the mistakes. Instead, students can learn better if a teacher points out positive things that the student has done and suggests he or she does more of that. (M, 222). Everyone can learn. If students are not learning, there is a failure on our part to teach well. (M, 333).

Effective Approaches for Online Instruction

With the advancements in technology, online education is exploding. Outside my undergraduate degree, all my higher education has had a distance learning element. I have always believed that this type of education is centered on the student being willing to learn on their own. However, many of the strategies presented show there is much that a teacher can do to facilitate learning and a good experience. The center should be selecting proper use of technology and having a plan for its use.

Online technologies have allowed better learning experiences such as blogging, real life role play in online games, and developing websites (W, 70). The pedagogical support for each of these should be the primary drive for selecting technology or online tools for education (W, 84). Care must be taken for use of social media pages, as privacy is a concern. A potential solution is making a separate personal Facebook account for instructional purposes (W, 88). In such cases, it is important to make sure the technology and online education can free up face to face time for more intentional instruction (W, 92).

Online instruction includes being effective with learning to become a distance learner, which includes understanding the student's experience with online learning (W, 103). Due to the

lack of impromptu interactions, careful planning must be undertaken in order to facilitate meaningful interactions (W, 104). When selecting technology to use in the classroom, I need to focus on the instructor, student, technology and content. Each of these should take into consideration the role of technology and the literacy of students with technology (M, 242).

Screening, Remediation, and Gatekeeping Functions Relevant to Teaching

There is a constant battle to center concern for the student with also not allowing an individual into a profession where there can then be harm to others. It is a heavy responsibility which often causes myself to be stricter on mistakes. Within aviation maintenance I often remind students that a mistake could kill someone. However, this may not be the best approach.

Operating out of fear and not excellence could cause problems of their own. Part of gatekeeping within the profession is to maintain fairness in interactions, procedures, and outcomes. Failure to maintain this would be an abdication of responsibility to students and the profession (M, 325).

Several factors were highlighted in the reading as ways to facilitate a constant screening of students in order to evaluate their effectiveness in the profession.

The goal of this aspect of teaching is to teach in a way that develops metacognition in students in which they can understand the way that they learn and how much they “know about knowing” (M, 294). Does the student understand how they learn and if they are learning? This is seen in how a student reads as well as how that student is graded.

Reading can be a key to knowing the ability of a counselor to do their work well. Those who read thoroughly, write better, remember more, and understand concepts better (W, 68). Grading falls into one area where self-monitoring is necessary to keep grades from being inflated but that are honest representations of what is being communicated to students (M, 128).

Assessing for strategic learning can happen as instructors encourage students to check their understanding even before a test or assessment (M, 299).

Assessment of Learning

Assessment of learning in the experimental framework is difficult due to the difficulty in controlling outcomes. Often the student learns not what was intended due to the varied emotional response and past experiences (W, 62). Assessing the development of a class or group is critical especially in formative feedback in order to correct and change even within the process of a class (W, 135). However, too often educators simply look at test scores to determine if learning is happening. For myself, focus on grades had always been how I measured myself. Thus, this is how I often view my students. There are a number of techniques to look at learning from a different perspective within the texts.

The use of solution focused evaluation techniques allow the student to be the expert on themselves and things such as compliments can encourage positive behavior and correct inaccuracies (W, 144). Additionally, the use of CAT's (Classroom Assessment Techniques) can be highly useful in gathering information on how students are learning. Assessment should be based on learning outcomes and a variety of sources such as embedded assessments or group work (M, 83). This is a mindset shift from the focus on tests alone. If tests are used, some tips are helpful including avoiding true-false tests due to the fact that many students will remember false statements as true. Also, multiple choice questions are hard to construct and often have prompts which give away the answer to the students (M, 89). Beyond just written tests, taking a different approach to testing can be made as suggested in the text. Assessing students on the triarchic

theory is a bigger predictor of success. These include analytic, creative, and practical knowledge (M, 167).

Ethical and Culturally Relevant Strategies Used in Counselor Preparation

There are many ways to ensure that the teaching strategies used are ethical and culturally relevant. These include ensuring that during lecture any students with disabilities have appropriate resources for understanding media or visual cues that they may miss. Additionally, social justice issues should be addressed such as voices being left out of discussions (W, 32). Educators should also be careful not to use sexist language and try to derive illustrations and cases from a variety of ethnic groups and cultures (W, 34). It is often hard for me to see beyond my own bias or even how respect is seen differently in different cultures. However, that should not hinder the discussion of bringing up this topic.

It is critical to determine and understand how to broach the issues of race and culture. It should not be assumed that these issues are affecting a client but educators should be open to discuss how they may affect a client or student (W, 154). There are many international students in my current classes from China and Korea. Too often I am unsure how to interact with them or understand their cultural differences. They also are hesitant to discuss them one on one as well. One way to overcome this would be to teach students to discuss their struggles with both inter-racial (cultural) and intra-racial (cultural) issues. This is done through helping them see the struggles with their own experiences and experiences with the broader culture or race (W, 158). Simple cues to look at were fascinating such as the amount of eye contact that differs among different cultures (M, 152).

Role of Mentoring in Counselor Education

One aspect of my current teaching position that I enjoy is the amount of time that we are able to have with each of our students. They are in class eight hours a day, five days a week. Unlike many disciplines, courses, and programs, this is a large amount of time. This provides ample opportunity for mentoring and deeper conversations with each student. This often means we are dealing with deeper issues and we can notice things that may go unnoticed in a larger less frequent classes. Through this we are able to work more closely with motivation and model what we want to see in our students. Especially in counselor education, we as educators should be modeling and exhibiting what we want to see in our students. Since professional involvement is important, educators should model the importance of professional involvement as a motivator for student engagement (W, 117).

As seen earlier, experience and emotions play an important role in helping students learn as well as recalling what they learned. If material is presented in a boring fashion with little interaction, there is not much hope that that information will stick in the students mind (M, 88). However, modeling passion for a student is a different approach. Faculty and teachers can exhibit enthusiasm and passion in a subject which can convert extrinsic motivation in a student to intrinsic motivation (M, 142). This will attract students not only to you but to the material that you want them to learn. Individuals want to know they are cared about and will be motivated to learn if this is communicated to them through mentoring.

One quote has stuck with me from the reading done. "The mind is not a vessel to be filled, but a fire to be kindled" (M, 101). Too often I fail to see the individual that each student is and the experiences and knowledge they already have. It is not my job to be the expert and fill

them up with all I have, but to teach them how to learn better and be lifelong learners. This simple shift will, I hope, change the way I teach and view each student that God puts in my path.

Criteria	Unsatisfactory	Fair	Good	Excellent
Quality: Reflects thoughtful, important points that demonstrate comprehension of content and applicability to practice as a counselor educator. Is creative and engaging. 150 points	Shows little evidence of comprehension of course content and applicability to practice as a counselor educator. 0-50 points	Shows some evidence of comprehension of course content and applicability to practice as a counselor educator. 50-75 points	Shows satisfactory evidence of comprehension of course content and applicability to practice as a counselor educator. 75-125 points	Shows high levels of evidence of comprehending course content and applicability to practice as a counselor educator. 125-150 points 140 pts.
Comments:				
Quantity and Timeliness 50 points This assignment must be completed on or before Wednesday, October 24, 2018 to attend the class.	Submitted after deadline, two or more sections have less than 250 words, or was not submitted at all 0 points & may not attend class	Submitted on time but one or more sections have more than 300 words. Grading Rubric-Self-Evaluation missing. 10 points	Submitted on time and all sections have only 250-300 words. Grading Rubric-Self-Evaluation included. 25-40 points	Submitted on time, all sections have only 250-300 words, and points are cited in the truncated format provided. Grading Rubric-Self-Evaluation included. 50 points
Comments:				

<p>Grammar, word choice, spelling and organization of paper reflects doctoral level scholarship (critical analysis and synthesis).</p> <p>APA Formatting is required including: Title Page, Abstract, Introduction, Conclusion, and References</p> <p>50 / 50 pts.</p>	<p>A lot of errors</p> <p>0-10 points</p>	<p>Fewer errors but still quite a bit</p> <p>10-20 points</p>	<p>Even fewer errors</p> <p>20-40 points</p>	<p>No errors</p> <p>40-50 points</p>
<p>Comments: 240 pts. total I struggled to write out all my notes I took from reading. The flow could be improved and was choppy at times. However, I have a great list of notes I will begin to share with my co-workers.</p>				

240/250

You did an excellent job collecting up “gems” from the course texts Brandon. It is clear to me that you engaged in much thoughtful critical analysis and synthesis in the process. I appreciate the insightful way your organized and presented your findings.

It is my hope and prayer that you continue to learn about and successfully apply best practices in education with your students. In doing so, you are certain to bless them and their future clients!

References

Svinicki, M., & McKeachie, W. (2014). *McKeachie's teaching tips: Strategies, research, and theory for college and university teachers.*

West, J., Bubenzer, D., Cox, J., & McGlothlin (2013). *Teaching in counselor education: Engaging students in learning.*