



## AN ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION OF

Stacey L. Carrillo for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Counseling presented on November 19, 2014.

Title: A Qualitative Metasynthesis of Counselor Professional Identity and Qualitative Study of How Doctoral Students Experience Their Professional Identity Development in a Nontraditional Counselor Education Program

Abstract approved: \_\_\_\_\_

Deborah J. Rubel

The purpose of the dissertation was to gain an understanding of counselor professional identity and identity development, as well as an understanding of the experiences of doctoral students as they develop their professional identity within a nontraditional (hybrid) counselor education (CE) program. This was accomplished through systematic literature review of the qualitative research on counselor professional identity and identity development and the completion of a qualitative grounded theory exploration of doctoral students in a hybrid CE program as they developed their professional identity. The literature review consisted of twelve studies, and identified the areas of counselor professional identity mostly frequently studied and those that had been understudied, it highlighted the most common qualitative methodologies used, and revealed eight overarching themes across the studies reviewed. These results set the foundation for the grounded theory examination of how doctoral students in a hybrid CE program experienced their identity development as they transitioned from practitioner to educator. This grounded theory study looked at the experiences of nine individuals who were either currently enrolled in, or who recently graduated from a hybrid CE doctoral program. Three rounds of semi-structured interviews were completed, audio recorded and

transcribed. A member check was conducted by email. Through the coding process, four categories emerged; *beginning hybrid doctoral program*, *learning how to be a counselor educator (CE)*, *connecting with others*, and *evolving sense of professional identity*.

Connecting with others developed as the central category because of its essential relationship to the professional identity experience of doctoral students in their hybrid programs. Beginning hybrid doctoral program emerged as the context of this study, and represented the hybrid program and certain experiences and qualities each participant had prior to starting their respective doctoral program. This context proved to be critical in fully understanding the professional identity development of the participants. This study provides a qualitative descriptive view of how doctoral students in a hybrid CE program experience their professional identity development. These findings are relevant to the counseling profession in general, academic program development, counselor educators, and have implications for future research.

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A Qualitative Metasynthesis of Counselor Professional Identity and Qualitative Study of  
How Doctoral Students Experience Their Professional Identity Development in a  
Nontraditional Counselor Education Program

by  
Stacey L. Carrillo

A DISSERTATION

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APPROVED:

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Dean of the Graduate School

I understand that my dissertation will become part of the permanent collection of Oregon State University libraries. My signature below authorizes release of my dissertation to any reader upon request.

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Stacey L. Carrillo, Author

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## Chapter 1: General Introduction

### Dissertation Overview

There is a decades old debate within the counseling profession about establishing an agreed upon collective professional identity for counselors. While there is currently general agreement about the need for a common professional identity and in presenting as a unified profession distinct from other helping professions, challenges remain. Despite these challenges much has been accomplished in recent years. In fact, the counseling profession as a whole has taken a strong stance on this issue. Both the American Counseling Association (ACA) and the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Programs (CACREP) have implemented initiatives, 20/20: A Vision for the Future of Counseling and 2009 CACREP Standards respectively, to ensure that a collective identity is established, and that professional identity is developed at a programmatic level for counselors-in-training (CITs). The development of professional identity of CITs has been recognized as a key component in counselor development and in strengthening the overall collective identity of the counseling profession.

The purpose of this dissertation is to demonstrate scholarly work by using the Manuscript Document Dissertation Format as outlined by the Oregon State University Graduate School. In following this format, this dissertation consists of two journal-formatted manuscripts. Manuscript 1 (Chapter 2), is a systematic review of research titled, *A Metasynthesis of the Qualitative Research on Counselor Professional Identity and Identity Development*. Manuscript 2 (Chapter 3), is a qualitative study titled, *Connecting With Others: How Doctoral Students Experience Their Professional Identity*

*Development Within the Context of a Nontraditional (Hybrid) Counselor Education Program.*

The implications for this research in the area of counselor professional identity and identity development are far reaching within the counseling profession. The issue of establishing an agreed upon collective identity impacts all counseling sub-specialties, affects policy making, and helps to affirm recognition by the general public that counseling is a distinct profession within the helping fields. Further, consequences regarding training and educational programs are great. By better understanding the concept of counselor professional identity and how it is developed, training at all levels can be enhanced to ensure key components and experiences are included programmatically. Taking steps to make sure professional identity is developed individually through training will move the counseling profession forward in solidifying a collective identity.

Research on the topic of counselor professional identity and the development of professional identity is limited. While there has been a plethora of conceptual articles on the subject of professional identity for the counseling profession (Bobby & Urofsky, 2011; Burkholder, 2012; Cashwell, Kleist, & Scofield, 2009; Davis & Gressard, 2011; Eriksen & Kress, 2006; Gale & Austin, 2003; Hanna & Bemak, 1997; McLaughlin & Boettcher, 2009; Myers, 1995; Pistole & Roberts, 2002; Ritchie, 1990; Thomas, 1991; Weinrach, Thomas, & Chan, 2001), little research has been conducted. Of the research conducted there have been less than a handful of quantitative studies (Calley & Hawley, 2008; Healey & Hays, 2012; Reiner, Dobmeier, & Hernandez, 2013). An overwhelming majority of the research has been done with qualitative methodologies (Auxier, Hughes,

& Kline, 2003; Brott & Myers, 1999; Dollarhide, Gibson, & Moss, 2013; Gibson, Dollarhide, & Moss, 2010; Henderson, Cook, Libby, & Zambrano, 2006; Limberg, Bell, Super, Jacobson, Fox, DePue, Christmas, Young, & Lambie, 2013; Luke & Goodrich, 2012; Mellin, Hunt, & Nichols, 2011; Nelson & Jackson, 2003; Perry, 2012; Woodside, Oberman, Cole, & Carruth, 2007; Swickert, 1997), predominantly using grounded theory and phenomenology. Further, the preponderance of research has been focused on how professional identity is developed, with just a few studies focused on professional identity itself as a construct. The most frequently studied population has been with CITs, and in contrast just a couple of studies have been done with doctoral students. No research has been conducted with counselor educators. Similarly, little if any attention has been given to multicultural considerations regarding professional identity or its development, or the various methods of instructional delivery, i.e. online or hybrid/blended learning formats. Given the importance of this topic, surprisingly little research has been conducted. However, the lack of research does provide considerable opportunity for future inquiry.

### **Manuscript 1 Overview: A Metasynthesis of the Qualitative Research on Counselor Professional Identity Development**

The first manuscript, Chapter 2, of this dissertation represents a systematic review of the qualitative research conducted in the United States on counselor professional identity development. The focus on qualitative research was the result of learning that the research in this area has been largely conducted using various qualitative methodologies. The research reviewed is comprised of twelve studies conducted between the time periods of 1997 through 2013.

This systematic review of research had three objectives; to conduct an overall characterization and evaluation of the total body of research being reviewed, and to

identify themes across all studies through a systematic synthesis. The characterization of the literature consisted of reviewing each article to ascertain the purpose or focus of the research, the population, specialization, and constructs examined. This characterization provided an overall picture of the qualitative research and identified what has been studied and what remains to be investigated (see Appendix A for a “snap shot” of the general characteristics of each article).

The evaluation of each study was done to determine if each study presented a clear research question, if the methodology was appropriate for the question being posed and in general if the studies were of good quality and credible. The criteria established by Hoyt and Bhati (2007), (research focus, setting, and researcher role, and presentation of findings), along with the concept of coherence (Kline, 2008) were used in the critique of each study (see Appendix B for a breakdown of criteria in relation to each study).

The third objective was to gain an understanding of what the literature in total revealed about counselor professional identity development for the counseling profession. A systematic synthesis of the findings for each of the twelve studies was conducted to identify common themes across studies. This thematic synthesis was performed following the process outlined by Thomas and Harden (2008) (see Appendices C and D to view the synthesis process).

This manuscript fills a critical gap in the literature as there has not been a metasynthesis of the qualitative research on this topic. Manuscript 1 outlines what has been researched and the areas that are either under studied or have yet to be examined. Through the thematic synthesis process, the identification of themes across each study serves to contribute to the current body of knowledge of counselor professional identity

and identity development. This synthesis further has the intent of producing new or deeper understandings of the constructs being examined.

**Manuscript 2 Overview: Connecting With Others: How Doctoral Students Experience Their Professional Identity Development Within the Context of a Nontraditional (Hybrid) Counselor Education Program**

The second manuscript, Chapter 3, is a qualitative grounded theory study that was conducted to better understand the professional identity development process for doctoral students in a nontraditional counselor education program.

An area that was identified as being understudied was that of doctoral students in counselor education programs as they develop an identity as counselor educators. Given the importance the counseling profession has placed on establishing a collective identity and fostering identity development in CITs, it was important to examine the identity development of doctoral students who will likely be teaching, supervising, and who will be responsible for the identity development of future counselors.

Research showed that two qualitative studies on the professional identity development of doctoral students had been conducted (Dollarhide et al., 2013; Limberg et al., 2013). Both of these studies were conducted with doctoral students who were enrolled in a traditional face-to-face counselor education doctoral program. However, in the recent decades nontraditional formats of teaching and instruction have become more accepted, and the counseling academy is no exception. CACREP currently lists a total of nineteen online masters and doctoral level programs. No studies have been conducted to better understand the affect a nontraditional learning format would have on professional identity development of counselor educators.

The purpose of this study was to increase the understanding of the experiences of doctoral students as they develop their professional identity as counselor educators in a nontraditional instructional program. Existing studies provided a limited understanding of the identity development process of doctoral students, and there is little if any understanding how nontraditional educational formats, such as a hybrid/blended learning environment, may impact professional identity development. Through this study the following research question was addressed: “How do doctoral students in a nontraditional instructional counselor education program experience their identity development as counselor educators?”

Recruitment for this study began by identifying hybrid doctoral counselor education programs and contacting program coordinators. Additionally, two listservs, CESNET and COUNSGRADS, were utilized to solicit potential participants. Nine participants met the criteria and volunteered for this study (see Appendices E, F, G and H to view the IRB approved recruitment materials). Three rounds of phone interviews were audio recorded and transcribed. Transcripts were analyzed using a grounded theory methodology including open, axial, and selective coding, and constant comparison was utilized throughout the process (see Appendices I, J, K, and L to view the documentation of the analysis process). Through the data analysis, the following four categories emerged; *beginning hybrid doctoral program*, *learning how to be a counselor educator (CE)*, *connecting with others*, and *evolving sense of professional identity*. Connecting with others developed as the central category because of its essential relationship to the professional identity experience of doctoral students in their hybrid programs. Beginning hybrid doctoral program emerged as the context of this study, and represented the hybrid

program and certain experiences and qualities each participant had prior to starting their respective doctoral program. This context proved to be critical in fully understanding the professional identity development of the participants. At the conclusion of the data analysis, participants were sent a member check by email (see Appendix M). Seven of the nine participants responded and affirmed that their experience was represented in the emergent theory.

### **Thematic Relevance**

These two manuscripts are linked thematically by the topic of professional identity and identity development for the counseling profession. Manuscript 1 represents a systematic review of research and details the current state of qualitative research in the United States for professional identity focusing on the characterization, evaluation of methodology and thematic synthesis of the studies reviewed. The conclusions and implications of Manuscript 1 informed Manuscript 2. Manuscript 2 was designed to address the importance of the topic to the counseling profession, and to also attend to the gaps in the literature. Therefore, a qualitative grounded theory study on the professional identity development of doctoral students in a nontraditional counselor education program was conducted. This was a worthy research pursuit and has implications for training, policy, and future research.

### **Organizational Structure of Dissertation**

The organization of this dissertation is in keeping with the chosen Manuscript Document Dissertation format. Chapter 1 serves as introduction to the topic of professional identity and professional identity development for the counseling profession. It provides a general description of the topic as a whole, and establishes the importance of

this area of inquiry. Chapter 1 gives a brief overview of Manuscript 1 (Chapter 2), which is a systematic review of the qualitative research related to counselor professional identity and professional identity development. Chapter 1 also provides an overview of Manuscript 2 (Chapter 3). Manuscript 2 outlines the completed research for a qualitative research study using a grounded theory methodology on professional identity of doctoral students matriculating in a nontraditional learning format. Lastly, Chapter 1 provides definitions of specialized terms used throughout the dissertation. The following terms have been identified as warranting a definition. These definitions are derived from Allen and Seaman, 2014 (p. 6):

1. Traditional instruction: Regularly scheduled classes with instruction delivered face-to-face is the primary mode of instruction delivery. Content is delivered primarily in writing or orally. Web-based technology is used minimally for course management or posting syllabus or assignments.
2. Nontraditional/distance instruction: Formats that utilize various modes of technology as a primary source of instruction, such as online or hybrid/blended formats. Content is delivered online, including online discussion, and courses may or may not have a face-to-face meeting component.
3. Blended/hybrid instruction: Courses or programs that utilize both face-to-face and online instruction, with a substantial proportion of the content delivered online. Typically a reduced number of face-to-face classes are scheduled, and online discussions occur between peers and instructor.
4. Online learning: Courses or programs where most or all of the content is delivered online. There is typically no face-to-face interaction with peers or instructors.

To this researcher's knowledge, inquiry in the area of professional identity development for doctoral students in a nontraditional counselor education program has not been conducted. This research will increase the understanding of the process of professional identity development, will add to the body of knowledge on this topic, and has implications for future training for CITs and counselor educators. Further is has the potential to enhance the effectiveness of nontraditional instruction methods with regards to fostering professional identity at all levels.

## Chapter 2

A Metasynthesis of the Qualitative Research on  
Counselor Professional Identity and Identity Development

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## Abstract

The purpose of this manuscript was to explore the academic qualitative literature focused on counselor professional identity and professional identity development. This comprehensive literature review provides a characterization, evaluation and synthesis of twelve qualitative studies published in the United States between the years of 1997 - 2013. The characterization of these studies looked at the specific purpose of each study, the constructs and populations being examined, and if whether a definition of professional identity was provided. The evaluation of these studies focused on five criteria to help assess the degree to which each study held to the principles of qualitative methodology. These criteria were the focus of inquiry, research setting, researcher role, presentation, and coherence. The third and final aspect of this literature review was a systematic synthesis of the qualitative research to identify overarching themes of what professional identity is and how it is developed across the life span of a counselor. Results of this literature review identified the most frequently examined constructs and populations, it highlighted the most common qualitative methodologies used, and eight overarching themes emerged across the twelve studies reviewed. These results provide a snapshot of the status of the qualitative literature on counselor professional identity and identity development. Based on these results implications for future research are discussed.

## **Introduction**

Professional identity has been a prominent subject within the counseling profession for many years. This topic has generated significant discussion for a variety of reasons, but has mainly focused on the collective identity for the counseling profession and the development of professional identity of individual counselors. Creating a cohesive collective identity for counselors has been framed as important for the viability of the profession (Gale & Austin, 2003; Calley & Hawley, 2008; Bobby & Urofsky, 2011; Davis & Gressard, 2011; Cashwell, Kleist, & Scofield, 2009; McLaughlin & Boettcher, 2009; Myers, 1995). As a part of this, the literature characterizes the development of professional identity as critical and understanding of this process as an important research focus (Auxier, Hughes, & Kline, 2003; Brott & Myers, 1999; Calley & Hawley, 2008; Dollarhide, Gibson, & Moss, 2013; Gibson, Dollarhide, & Moss, 2010; Healey & Hays, 2012; Henderson, Cook, Libby, & Zambrano, 2006; Limberg, Bell, Super, Jacobson, Fox, DePue, Christmas, Young, & Lambie, 2013; Luke & Goodrich, 2012; Nelson & Jackson, 2003; Perry, 2012; Reiner, Dobmeier, & Hernandez, 2013; Woodside, Oberman, Cole, & Carruth, 2007). Research in the areas of counselor identity and identity development has been primarily qualitative. The purpose of this review is to characterize, critique, and synthesize the qualitative research to answer the larger question of, “How does professional identity develop across counselor lifespan?”

### **A Collective Identity for the Counseling Profession**

Most would argue that the creation of a strong collective professional identity is an essential step in the evolution of the counseling profession (Gale & Austin, 2003; Calley & Hawley, 2008; Bobby & Urofsky, 2011; Davis & Gressard, 2011; Cashwell et

al., 2009; McLaughlin & Boettcher, 2009). This agreement has not happened overnight nor has its path been well paved. A heated debate on this topic has been occurring for over four decades as evidenced by the many position papers written for professional periodicals, by the theoretical and research oriented articles published, and even by the back and forth discourse on professional listservs such as CESNET. These discussions have centered on the need for counseling to have a collective professional identity that is separate and unique from other helping professions such as psychology, social work, and psychiatry. The expressed need for a unified collective identity has been linked to gaining widespread recognition by third party payers and the general public, to ensuring consistency in licensure titles and requirements, and to obtaining parity among other mental health professions (Calley & Hawley, 2008; Hanna & Bemak, 1997; McLaughlin & Boettcher, 2009).

Initially, one of the primary concerns was becoming recognized as a profession, which was considered an important step in garnering general public recognition in the field of mental health. Counseling has come a long way since Ritchie (1990) proclaimed that counseling had not yet achieved professional status. Since this proclamation, much has been accomplished. Counseling has a recognized professional association, the American Counseling Association (ACA), a code of ethics, an educational accrediting body, the Council for Accreditation of Counseling & Related Educational Programs (CACREP), and as of 2010 licensure in all 50 states. With these accomplishments counseling has securely positioned itself as a recognized profession (Gale & Arden, 2003).

While recognition as a profession is a significant accomplishment in the quest toward a collective identity, several challenges remain. One challenge arises from the profession being comprised of many specializations making it difficult to reach agreement about a singular counselor identity (McLaughlin & Boettecher, 2009; Calley & Hawley, 2008; Gale & Austin, 2003; Myers, 1995). A second challenge stems from counseling espousing a humanistic perspective, which conflicts with the pervasive medical model that guides clinical practice in the work environment (Hansen, 2003; Erikson & Kress, 2006). And another significant challenge is that the counseling profession does not have a distinct body of knowledge to call its own. The body of knowledge used by the counseling profession is multidisciplinary (Pistole & Roberts, 2002). This makes it difficult to establish a clear distinction in professional identity between other helping professions when counselors are primarily drawing research and theory from other disciplines. While these challenges have practical and political implications, they also likely stem from plain old fashioned growing pains as counseling is the newest of the helping professions (Mellin, Hunt, & Nichols, 2011).

In response to these challenges, ACA and CACREP have taken steps toward strengthening the profession's collective identity. Through ACA's initiatives, 20/20: A Vision for the Future of Counseling (2005) and Principles for Unifying and Strengthening the Profession (2009), a strategic plan was created to address issues of disparate licensure titles and scopes of practice (Kaplan & Gladding, 2011), and emphasis was placed on developing professional identity in counselors, counselors-in-training (CITs) and overall identity solidarity. Additionally, in 2010 ACA affirmed a unified definition of

counseling: “counseling is a professional relationship that empowers diverse individuals, families, and groups to accomplish mental health, wellness, education, and career goals”.

Further, the revisions made in the 2009 CACREP Standards represented a clear stance on building a strong counselor professional identity (Urofsky, 2008; Bobby & Urofsky, 2011; Davis & Gressard, 2011). The most controversial revision required core faculty in CACREP programs to consist of individuals who have graduated from counselor education programs, preferably CACREP accredited, or who have worked in a CACREP counselor education program for at least one year. This emphasized that individuals with a CACREP background are in a better position to foster counselor professional identity in CITs than professionals with different educational backgrounds, licensure, and professional identities. The actions taken by both ACA and CACREP support the counseling professions goal of a unified collective identity and emphasize the need to develop professional identity in future counselors. Together they also communicate the circular nature of this issue; instilling professional identity at an individual and programmatic level helps to ensure CITs develop a professional identity that fits within, and strengthens the greater collective identity of the profession.

Policy and literature suggest that individual professional identity impacts the collective identity of the profession. Therefore, understanding the development of individual professional identity is important. Given the importance of this topic, a significant amount of research should exist exploring how professional identity is promoted and developed throughout a professional lifespan. However, theoretical, conceptual and position articles are predominate on this subject. Authors of conceptual articles indicate that developing a professional counselor identity is paramount for solid

ethical practice (Corey, Corey, & Callanan, 2012; Granello & Young, 2012). Others imply that counselors with a strong counselor identity practice within the scope of their training, licensure and expertise, and are less susceptible to role confusion when working side by side with other helping professionals (Bobby & Urofsky, 2011; Gale & Austin, 2003; Gibson, Dooley, Kelchner, Moss & Vacchio, 2012; Woodside et al., 2007).

Further, by having a strong professional identity a counselor may carry the values, knowledge and skills associated with counseling and will be able to advocate on their own behalf, and on behalf of the counseling profession as a whole (Bobby & Urofsky, 2011). These conceptual articles consistently underscore the importance of counselor professional identity and its development (Burkholder, 2012; Gale & Austin, 2003; Calley & Hawley, 2008; Bobby & Urofsky, 2011; Davis & Gressard, 2011; Cashwell et al., 2009; McLaughlin & Boettcher, 2009; Myers, 1995; Pistole & Roberts, 2002).

While there have been numerous conceptual articles published, surprisingly little actual research exists on this topic specific to the counseling profession. While the dearth of overall research is surprising, it is not surprising that what does exist is primarily qualitative research. Qualitative research is congruent with both the values of counseling researchers and with the exploratory status of research in this area. It focuses on the unique and subjective experiences of the individual, and this type of perspective aligns with those practicing within the helping professions (McAuliffe, Eriksen, & Associates, 2000; Reisetter, Korcuska, Yexley, Bonds, Nikels, & McHenry, 2004).

The significant number of qualitative studies in this area warrants an analysis of what has been examined and how it has been studied in order to identify potential research needs. Further, there is a growing trend toward synthesizing primary qualitative

research for the purpose of integrating findings across studies (Thomas & Harden, 2008; Zimmer, 2004). A synthesis of this kind is an important tool for bringing existing evidence together to generate higher level themes to inform policy and practice for the counseling community. Therefore, a review and synthesis of the existing qualitative research offers a unique opportunity to potentially inform practice in the area of counselor identity development. Additionally, Thomas and Harden (2008) indicate that evaluation of methodology is an important prelude to synthesis of qualitative studies. The purpose of this review is to characterize, evaluate, and systematically synthesize qualitative research related to identity development in counselors.

### **Review of Methodology**

In order to gather research on professional identity development specific to counseling, Google Scholar, Academic Search Premiere, and PsycInfo databases were used. The following search terms used were in various combinations in order to complete the most exhaustive search possible: professional, identity, development, counseling, collective identity, counselor education, belonging, identity development, professionalization, career, social identity and life span. This search resulted in a plethora of articles and studies across disciplines, including nursing, social work, higher education, medicine, to name but a few. Further, there was a solid number of articles and research published internationally. Most of the articles could be characterized as conceptual, a majority of the actual research was qualitative, and less than a handful of quantitative studies emerged.

This systematic review focused on qualitative research; therefore, only articles published in scholarly, peer reviewed journals and those clearly using qualitative methods

for research were selected. The publication date for research being reviewed fell between the years of 1997 through 2013. Finally, only studies that focused on counseling and any of the specialty areas of ACA were considered. This left twelve qualitative studies focused on counseling, counselor education, school counseling, mental health counseling, marriage and family, rehabilitation, and combinations of these, (Auxier et al., 2003; Brott & Myers, 1999; Dollarhide et al., 2013; Gibson et al., 2010; Henderson et al., 2006; Limberg et al., 2013; Luke & Goodrich, 2012; Mellin et al., 2011; Nelson & Jackson, 2003; Perry, 2012; Swickert, 1997; Woodside et al., 2007).

The purposes of this systematic review of qualitative research of professional identity development were to characterize and evaluate each study and to systematically synthesize the findings to answer the question, “How does professional identity develop across counselor lifespan?” In the characterization of the research, each study was analyzed to provide an overall picture of what has been studied and what remains to be investigated. During the evaluation phase, the qualitative studies were assessed to determine the quality of the studies and if any were sufficiently flawed to be excluded. The criteria of research focus, setting, researcher role, presentation of findings, and coherence were used to critique each study (Hoyt & Bhati, 2007; Kline, 2008). In the final phase, a systematic thematic synthesis was conducted using the results of all included studies and following the parameters established by Thomas and Harden (2008) to uncover overarching themes describing lifespan counselor identity development. This process entailed bringing individual studies together with one another at a more abstract level (Zimmer, 2004). These abstract levels represent new meanings and interpretations and contribute to the overall knowledge base on this topic.

## **Characterization of the Qualitative Research on Professional Identity Development**

The general characteristics that emerged from the review are the constructs examined, the population and specialization of the participants researched, definition provided, and the purpose of the research conducted. Assessing the characteristics that distinguish each article, two rather substantive categories emerged related to the constructs examined. The two primary constructs are 1) professional identity and 2) professional identity development. The first assumes the development of one's professional identity has already occurred, and the individual has actualized who she/he is as a professional counselor. The second construct implies that professional identity is developed, and is not immediately achieved or an automatic state of being. Two studies identified professional identity as the construct examined and the remaining ten studies examined the development of professional identity. These two constructs, professional identity and professional identity development, will serve as the framework in which the other identified characteristics, (population, specialization, definition, and purpose), will be discussed and reviewed.

**Professional identity construct.** As previously stated, two studies focused on the construct of professional identity (Mellin et al., 2011; Swickert, 1997). In addition to examining professional identity, both studies examined a secondary construct. One surveyed participants who had passed the National Counselor Examination (NCE) (Mellin et al., 2011), while the other study looked at private practice as the secondary construct (Swickert, 1997).

**Populations/specialties.** The populations that were examined for both studies on professional identity were participants who had completed their education and/or training

and were actively engaged in the practice of counseling. One study focused on post-master counselors practicing in different counseling specialties of community mental health and school (Mellin et al., 2011). The second study was conducted with post-doctorate counselors and did not clearly specify if the participants were affiliated with a specialization (Swickert, 1997).

**Definition.** Of these two articles neither offered a definition of what professional identity is as a benchmark for comparison to the outcomes of their respective studies. However, both articles briefly mentioned what is generally considered characteristics of the profession's collective identity; developmental, preventative, and wellness oriented. Both studies were clear that the medical model largely embraced by other helping professions was not part of the counseling identity (Mellin et al., 2011; Swickert, 1997).

**Purpose.** Both studies sought to identify themes that define the professional identity of the practicing counselors. One study identified three themes and the other identified seven. There was little overlap between the themes identified from each study, with only one similarity, which was the theme of counseling having a more holistic, wellness/preventive, and developmental focus compared to other helping professions.

**Professional identity development construct.** Overwhelmingly the qualitative research that exists, ten of the twelve studies, have examined the construct of professional identity development. In addition to examining the development of professional identity, three other constructs were studied within the context of professional identity development. These constructs were involvement with Chi Sigma Iota (CSI) in a leadership capacity (Luke & Goodrich, 2012), the influence of using a distance education

format for supervision (Perry, 2012), and the cultural identity of Hispanic interns (Nelson & Jackson, 2003).

***Population/specialties.*** Of these ten studies, five focused on the population of CITs (Auxier et al., 2003; Gibson et al., 2010; Nelson & Jackson, 2003; Perry, 2012; Woodside, 2007). Three studies were conducted with practicing counselors (Brott & Myers, 1999; Henderson et al., 2006; Luke & Goodrich, 2012), and the remaining two studies were focused on doctoral students in counselor education programs (Dollarhide et al., 2012; Limberg et al., 2013). Of these ten articles only three focused on a specific specialization within counseling; two studies focused on school counselors, and one on marriage and family. Four studies identified the participant pool as having a variety of counseling specializations, including various combination of mental health, school, student affairs, marriage and family, community, rehabilitation, and pastoral. Three studies did not clearly specify if the participants in the study identified with any particular specialization.

***Definition.*** Of the ten studies focused on professional identity development, seven offered an explicit definition of professional identity. The definitions provided are different and broad in scope; however common elements were identified. According to the research, professional identity occurs within the context of an identified professional community (Gibson et al., 2010; Henderson et al., 2006; Perry, 2012), it entails labeling oneself as a professional (Brott & Myers, 1999; Gibson et al., 2010; Henderson et al., 2006; Perry, 2012), and there is a link between one's personal and professional selves (Brott & Myers, 1999; Gibson et al., 2010). One definition was provided by two studies, and can be used to summarize the various components of the other definitions, "the

integration of professional training with personal attributes in the context of a professional community” (Gibson et al., 2010, p. 21; Limberg et al., 2013, p. 40).

**Purpose.** Four studies focused on theory development (Auxier et al. 2003; Brott & Myers, 1999; Dollarhide et al., 2012; Gibson et al. 2010). Collectively, these four studies encompass the development of professional identity through the career life span of a counselor including academic training, graduation, beginning practitioner, seasoned practitioner, and counselor educator. Six studies did not focus on theory development, but instead on the contributing factors, experiences, or themes considered part of the identity formation process.

**Summary of characteristics.** In summary, reviewing characteristics of the twelve articles that comprise this systematic review of research, several things stood out. First, there has been a greater interest in studying the development of professional identity than there has been in professional identity itself; respectively ten vs. two studies have been conducted.

Further, what is conspicuously absent from the literature is an agreed upon definition. Of the twelve studies, seven presented an explicit definition. While two of the definitions were the same, most of the definitions were different and broad in scope. Of the two articles that focused on professional identity neither provided a definition; however, both did briefly reference aspects of the counseling profession’s collective identity.

Additionally, the populations examined in the current research have been quite limited. The most predominant population studied has been with masters level CITs, which totaled five. This is in line with the research that has indicated that professional identity is developed during training (Auxier et al., 2003; Brott & Myers, 1999; Gibson et

al., 2010). The second most studied population would be with individuals who have completed their training and are practicing; four post-masters degree, and one post-doctoral degree. Current research reflects that two studies have explored the identity development of doctoral students in counselor education programs. No qualitative study has been conducted with counselor educators. Similarly, little if any attention has been given to multicultural considerations and professional identity or its development. Further, when looking at the area of specialization three studies targeted specific specialty areas, and the remaining nine studies were either from a mix of specialties, or the researchers did not clearly identify if the participants were affiliated with a specialty. Based on this characterization of the literature there are many opportunities for further research.

### **Evaluation of the Qualitative Methods Used**

In this section of the systematic review of research each of the twelve articles were evaluated to determine if they are of good quality, credible and hold to the principles and goals of qualitative research. While there is yet to be consensus on standards in which to evaluate qualitative research, the following five criteria have been selected as a framework for this process: 1) focus of research or inquiry, 2) research setting, 3) researcher role, 4) presentation of findings, and 5) coherence. The first four criteria are taken from Hoyt and Bahti (2007) and assist in distinguishing qualitative research from the more prevalent quantitative inquiry. The fifth criterion, coherence was selected as a means to assess the alignment of epistemological assumptions with the methodology being used for each study. Coherence takes into account the approach chosen, methods used, analysis of data and results (Kline, 2008).

**Focus of research or inquiry.** The first criterion examined is that of research inquiry or focus. For the purpose of this evaluation, research focus will be defined as whether the research is ideographic or nomothetic in nature. Quantitative inquiry is closely associated with a nomothetic approach which seeks generalizable knowledge (Hoyt & Bahti, 2007). In contrast, qualitative research uses an ideographic approach and looks for a deep understanding of the unique experiences of an individual, and there is no assumption that findings can be applied to a broader group outside those that were studied (Hoyt & Bahti, 2007). Researchers who engage in ideographic inquiry will establish a high degree of acquaintance and establish a collaborative relationship with the study participants.

In order to help determine how closely each study adhered to an ideographic perspective the following scale was established: High, Medium, Low, and None. High on the scale represents that more than one face-to-face interaction occurred. This could be in the form of multiple interviews, or an interview and observation of participants. Medium represents that at least one face-to-face interaction occurred. This includes a combination of face-to-face and phone contact, or the collection of artifacts. Low represents phone contact only, and None implies that no face-to-face or phone contact between the actual researchers and participants occurred.

Using this as a framework, three of the twelve studies reviewed were considered High with the researchers interviewing, or observing the participants directly (Auxier et al., 2003, Brott & Myers, 1999; Henderson et al., 2006). These researchers spent significant time conducting either face-to-face interviews, focus groups, or observing participants. This allowed for a greater chance that a collaborative relationship was

forged and that the participant's unique experiences were understood. Five studies were designated as Medium in regards to their ideographic perspective (Dollarhide et al., 2012; Gibson et al., 2010; Limberg et al., 2013; Woodside, 2007; Swickert, 1997). Each of these studies attempted to engage in at least one face-to-face interaction either through individual interviews, or using a focus group format. The two studies that were identified as being Low for their alignment with an ideographic perspective conducted phone interviews with participants (Luke & Goodrich, 2012; Perry, 2012). Both studies had participants that were located across the United States. One study specifically cited conducting telephone interviews because of the impracticality of interviewing participants in person. There were also two studies where the researchers had no direct contact with the participants, and therefore the studies were rated as None. One study utilized a survey method for collecting data (Mellin et al., 2011), while the other used research assistants to collect and transcribe the data. In the latter study the primary researchers did not directly interact with the participants (Nelson & Jackson, 2003).

Overall, eight studies cited having face-to-face interaction with the participants. To fully understand the lived experiences of the participants, it is important to not only assess the content of what is being presented, but also to assess the paralinguistic and body language of the communication. While phone interviews still provide much information, it may be difficult to argue that a collaborative relationship was established between the researchers and participants. Those studies, in which the researchers had no direct contact with the participants, are counter to the authentic principles and practices as outlined by Hoyt and Bahti (2007).

**Research setting.** The second criterion used in this evaluation is research setting. In qualitative research an emphasis is placed on context to understand both behavior and the experience of the participants (Hoyt & Bhati, 2007). This means the researcher spends considerable time with the study participants in their own environment. The studies that were evaluated examined if participants were interviewed, and/or observed, in their natural setting, meaning the environment in which the participants work, study, or train.

Only two studies cited that the interviews and observations were all conducted in the natural setting of the participants (Brott & Myers, 1999; Swickert, 1997). Another study did not clearly indicate where the interviews were conducted, but did provide clear reference that observations occurred in the actual schools where the participants worked (Auxier et al., 2003). The remaining nine studies either did not specify where the interviews occurred, or it was clear by the data collection, i.e. phone interviews, or survey, that utilizing the natural setting of the participants did not occur.

**Researcher role.** The third criteria identified by Hoyt and Bhati (2007), is that of the role of the researcher. Qualitative researchers do not ignore their own assumptions or biases, they engage in a process of reflexivity to better understand the lens through which the study will be conducted (Hoyt & Bhati, 2007, p. 203). In contrast, quantitative researchers take steps to eliminate any subjective influence. The perspectives and interventions differ and are grounded in different theoretical underpinnings. Each article was assessed as to how the researchers embraced the role of research instrument by outlining upfront their biases and assumptions as they engaged in their respective

research. Further each article was reviewed to see if the researcher articulated a desire to minimize or eliminate these biases and assumptions.

Researchers in five of the twelve studies detailed their biases and assumptions going into the study and that these assumptions and biases were based on personal experiences and literature reviewed (Auxier et al., 2003; Dollarhide et al., 2012; Gibson et al., 2010; Limberg et al., 2013; Luke & Goodrich, 2012). Three other studies mentioned the importance of understanding biases and assumptions of the researchers and the impact on the subsequent findings of a study (Brott & Myers, 1999; Swickert, 1997; Woodside et al., 2007). However, these three studies did not provide details regarding the respective biases or assumptions of the researchers. The remaining four studies made no mention of the researcher biases or assumptions as they may pertain to the research being conducted (Henderson et al., 2006; Mellin et al., 2011; Nelson & Jackson, 2003; Perry, 2012). It should also be noted that only one study made mention of wanting to minimize researcher bias (Gibson et al., 2010).

It is important for the researcher to reflect on her/his own experiences and beliefs about the topic being researched, so that the lens from which the research is being conducted is understood. Five out of the twelve studies included this detailed reflection, but the majority of the studies made little or no mention of the importance of understanding research biases and assumptions and how these are used in qualitative inquiry.

**Presentation of findings.** The fourth aspect of qualitative research evaluated in this review is that of the presentation of findings. Presentation of findings includes direct quotations from participants as a means to convey more intimately the experience of the

individuals being studied and the process of meaning making that occurred using their own words (Hoyt & Bhati, 2007). The twelve studies critiqued were reviewed to determine if quotations of at least one sentence were provided, if extended free standing quotes were offered, and if any identifiers were included with the quotes in order to provide a more robust portrait of each participant (Hoyt & Bhati, 2007).

Eleven of the twelve studies offered quotes from participants throughout the presentation of findings. The quotes provided numbered from six to seventy-two. Six of the studies also provided extended free standing quotes consisting of multiple sentences. Three studies identified the participants using an assigned pseudonym (Luke & Goodrich, 2012; Perry, 2012; Swickert, 1997). Only one study did not provide distinct quotes, but instead offered generalized sentiments of the study participants (Brott & Myers, 1999).

A majority of researchers understood the value of providing direct quotes in order to gain a better understanding of the research participant's experiences and how they make meaning. However, less than half offered extended quotes, which gives a "more unadulterated picture of the participant's thinking", even fewer studies used identifiers, which also helps to give "a more complete sense of the experiential worlds of the participants" (Hoyt & Bahti, 2007, p. 206).

**Coherence.** The fifth and final criterion used in this evaluative process is coherence, which is also considered a characteristic that represents quality in a qualitative research study. According to Kline (2008), coherence in the context of qualitative research means the research was conducted utilizing a consistent epistemological perspective. A study having coherence means that the philosophical underpinnings were not compromised and that the same epistemological assumptions were applied to all

aspects of the study. Kline (2008) implied the need for researchers to describe the selected methodological approach using the specific terms from the literature, and including the analytical process to help build credibility and to educate on the merits of a qualitative approach.

In total, six different methodological approaches were cited in the twelve studies reviewed. Five studies used a grounded theory approach, three studies cited using phenomenology, and case study, consensual qualitative research (CQR), survey, and self-study were each represented in one study.

Grounded theory was the most used methodology (Auxier et al., 2003; Brott & Myers, 1999; Dollarhide et al., 2012; Gibson et al., 2010; Luke & Goodrich, 2012). According to Creswell (2007), grounded theory is used to generate or discover a theory or explanation. All five studies seemed to demonstrate coherence in relation to the epistemological assumptions of grounded theory inquiry. Four of the five studies presented a reason for their methodological choice, and only one was vague about the selection of using a grounded theory method (Brott & Myers, 1999). Each identified a process to be examined, and a subsequent theory to be developed based on the experiences of the participants being interviewed. All five followed data analysis methods outlined in Creswell (2007), including a systematic coding process, one mentioned using constant comparison, and one memoing. The language usage supports the terms typically found in grounded theory inquiry. Four of the five studies presented diagrams/figures to represent the theory that emerged (Auxier et al., 2003; Brott & Myers, 1999; Dollarhide et al., 2012; Gibson et al., 2010), and only one article did not support the findings with direct quotes from study participants (Brott & Myers, 1999). An

area that was weak in three of the articles was the act of engaging in multiple interviews and observations of the participants by the researchers. This minimal engagement or interaction with the participants falls short regarding the data collection aspect of grounded theory.

The second most common qualitative methodology used was phenomenology. Creswell (2007) states that the purpose of a phenomenological study is to “reduce individual experiences with a phenomenon to a description of the universal essence” (p. 58). Three studies reviewed were conducted using a phenomenological approach (Nelson & Jackson, 2003; Perry, 2012, Woodside et al., 2007). Of these three studies only one clearly specified that the purpose of the study was to understand the participant’s experience of a specific phenomenon, used a few broad and general questions to elicit the participants’ experience related to a phenomenon, and analyzed the data by identifying units of meaning, and clustering these units to find themes in the data (Woodside et al., 2007). The other two studies diverged from the established procedures of phenomenology and drew from other methodological approaches, specifically grounded theory (Nelson & Jackson, 2003; Perry, 2012). Kline (2008) stated a common illustration of using mixed methodologies is when a study cites a phenomenological approach, but then uses grounded theory principles for data analysis. This appears to be the case with these two studies. Of these three articles, only one adhered to the epistemological assumptions of a phenomenological approach and demonstrated coherence (Woodside et al., 2007). It should be noted, that none of these three articles spent any time describing phenomenology for the reader to better understand this methodology.

The next qualitative methodological approach assessed in this review was case study (Swickert, 1997). Case study method involves the examination of an issue explored through one or more cases within a bound system (Creswell, 2007). The qualitative study using a case study methodology implied that the “bound system” being used was private practice. The chosen methodology was not identified until the end of the data collection section leading into the results section, where the author wrote that ten case studies were written. Interviews were conducted both in person and telephone, and artifacts were collected in the form of brochures and business cards. Using multiple sources of information, such as this is in alignment with case study methodology (Creswell, 2007). Specific techniques used in the analysis of data were not provided with much detail, except to indicate the case study profiles were analyzed and connections between the case studies made. Assessing the degree of coherence present in this study is difficult to determine, little reference was given related to case study methodology, and none of the verbiage normally associated with this particular approach was used.

One study cited using CQR as the chosen methodology (Limberg et al., 2013). CQR incorporates aspects from other qualitative methodologies, including phenomenology, grounded theory, and comprehensive analysis. It utilizes open ended questions, requires several researchers to analyze the data, emphasizes consensus, uses at least one auditor, and identifies domains or core ideas (Hill, Knox, Thompson, Williams, Hess, & Landany, 2005). In this study, researchers articulated the purpose of the study and why this particular methodology was used. Further description of the methodology and how the approach was to be implemented was provided. Focus groups were conducted and open ended questions used to generate data. Coding was done by several

researchers, an external auditor was used, and consensus was reached regarding the emergent domains. Based on the tenants of CQR and the criteria used for this evaluation of methodology, this study appears to demonstrate coherence.

The last two studies being evaluated for their coherence did not specify using a commonly recognized qualitative methodology, but upon review it appeared that a mix of methodologies were applied (Henderson et al., 2006; Mellin et al., 2011). Of these two studies, one cited the research as a “self-study” (Henderson et al., 2006). This study indicated finding the “essence” of the participant’s experience, which is decidedly phenomenological, and explicitly stated that a grounded theory approach was used in the analysis of data. The second study was identified by the researchers as a qualitative study, but the presentation of the research question, the use of a survey to collect data, and the statistical demographic information is more congruent with quantitative inquiry (Mellin et al., 2011).

**Summary of evaluation.** Of the twelve studies over half engaged in a clear ideographic process, in which the researchers had contact with the research participants. Five studies had researchers who explicitly embraced the role of researcher as research instrument, by clearly stating their biases and assumptions in the study (Auxier et al., 2003; Dollarhide et al., 2012; Gibson et al., 2010; Limberg et al., 2013; Luke & Goodrich, 2012). A very low number of studies, three out of twelve, cited interviewing or observing the participants in their natural setting. The one factor that a majority of the studies adhered to was the presentation of findings. All but one study offered participant quotes to support the findings of the study, half provided extended quotes, and three studies used identifiers to enrich the information being provided. Of the twelve studies,

six could be considered to have demonstrated coherence throughout the study (Auxier et al., 2003; Dollarhide et al., 2012; Gibson et al., 2010; Limberg et al., 2013; Luke & Goodrich, 2012; Woodside, et al., 2007), one did a fair job of demonstrating coherence (Brott & Myers, 1999), and the other five are not considered coherent (Nelson & Jackson, 2003; Perry, 2012; Swickert, 1997; Henderson et al., 2006; Mellin et al., 2011). Three of these five non-coherent studies veered from the originally stated epistemological assumption and mixed the methodological approaches primarily during data collection and analysis. The remaining two studies claimed to be qualitative, but did not cite a specific methodology, and instead pulled from many methodologies, including quantitative. Based on the criteria used in this critique, six studies would arguably be considered of good quality and credible.

### **Thematic Synthesis of Qualitative Literature**

In the third section of this review of qualitative literature, a systematic synthesis of the research was conducted to identify overarching themes addressing the questions of what professional identity is and how it is developed across the life span of a counselor. According to Zimmer (2004) a qualitative meta-synthesis entails using the findings from primary qualitative studies that are connected by the same topic and presenting an analysis of the primary data. It involves a comparison, translation and analysis of the original findings with the intent to generate new meanings. A synthesis of this kind has the potential to inform policy and practice for the counseling community. For the purposes of this review, a thematic synthesis was conducted as described by Thomas and Harden (2008).

According to Thomas and Harden (2008), a thematic synthesis involves three stages starting with coding the findings of each study line by line. The second stage is developing descriptive themes, which will likely be similar to those identified in the primary study. The third stage is the generation of analytical themes. Analytical themes represent a possible new interpretation of the construct(s) being examined (Thomas & Harden, 2008).

The findings from each of the twelve studies being reviewed were coded during thematic analysis. Once the findings were coded, descriptive themes were identified. Upon review of the descriptive themes, overarching analytic themes began to emerge that described how professional identity develops in counselors. There were a total of eight analytic themes identified in conducting this thematic synthesis. These eight themes are, Personality/Past Experience, Questions/Self-Reflection, Learning, External Influences, Growth, Process Related, Community, and Defining Counseling. Each theme will be reviewed and discussed appropriately.

**Personality/past experience.** The analytical theme of Personality/Past Experience was a prominent theme that emerged. Entering the profession of counseling was cited as being a “calling” (Henderson et al., 2006), and there were several references to having personal characteristics and values that were a good fit for the field of counseling (Henderson et al., 2006; Luke & Goodrich, 2010; Nelson & Jackson, 2003; Woodside et al., 2007). It was also mentioned that already having certain characteristics, such as self-awareness, were helpful to CITs as they entered and progressed in their development (Luke & Goodrich, 2010; Woodside et al., 2007). One participant stated, “I went back to myself as a child and just personality traits that I’ve always been, I feel like

I've always been self-aware" (Woodside et al., 2007, p. 20). This theme seems to suggest that the development of professional identity may begin before starting a training program.

**Questions/self-reflection.** The theme of Questioning/Self-Reflection represents a process by which the individuals questions themselves, the choices made, and ability to develop competence. This aspect of questioning self seems to be prevalent with both masters and doctoral students. One doctoral student stated, "...In that part I'm good, and I'm lost again, and so it kind of ebb and flows" (Dollarhide et al., 2012, p. 143). This same theme also encompasses the person questioning others, specifically the feedback received during the training process. In a study conducted by Auxier et al. (2003), one participant engaged in questioning of others and self-reflection after receiving feedback by stating, "...I've had to sit back and reflect and say, 'Ok, am I really not being present, or is that just his perception'" (p. 34). Another participant from the same study stated, "The attitude was really good going in, and then, as I got into it, I was questioning myself and questioning everything about what I did and how I did it", (p. 35). It appears that throughout the process of developing professional identity the individual is engaging in a process of questioning self and ongoing self-reflection.

**Learning.** A major analytic theme that emerged was that of Learning. Three sub-themes emerged from this analytic theme, conceptual learning, experiential learning, and the idea of life-long learning. Conceptual learning represents the act of gaining knowledge of theory and concepts typically acquired in a classroom or structured setting. Experiential learning consists of applying conceptual knowledge in a practicum or internship setting. Experiential learning also includes any learning done outside of the

classroom or in addition to the curriculum that exposes the individual to real-life situations.

Experiential learning was identified as a critical step in growth and development as a counselor. Consistently, the research reflected that participants experienced anxiety and frustration when starting the experiential component of a training program, specifically with the transition from conceptual to experiential learning (Auxier et al., 2003; Henderson et al., 2006; Nelson & Jackson, 2003; Woodside et al., 2007). Despite the anxiety associated with experiential learning, it was distinguished as a critical component to learning how to be a counselor, developing identity and building confidence. In a study by Nelson and Jackson (2003), one participant stated that “Classes helped, but experience made all the difference” (p. 8). Of special note, experiential learning was strongly emphasized in the two studies focused on doctoral students developing their identity as counselor educators. The experiential learning that was identified as most meaningful to the doctoral students as they transitioned from practitioner to educator was that of teaching, supervising, and conducting research.

The third sub-theme to emerge was that of life-long learning and the realization that learning was ongoing and did not stop upon graduation, or even licensure. Specific to the population of counselors who were practicing, life-long learning was associated with continuing education. One of the study’s participants considered earning their doctorate degree as continuing education (Swickert, 2007).

**External influences.** The analytic theme of External Influences is comprised of relationships, as well as other external factors such as environment that catalyze and support the identity development process. The sub-theme of relationships can further be

broken down by supportive relationships and evaluative relationships. Supportive relationships consist of relationships with peers, family, and friends. Supportive relationships were those that offered reassurance and helped normalize an experience. In the study by Woodside et al., (2007) a participant shared, “I talk to peers in my class now and then about something like that [her worries] and realize most of them are just in the same spot and I don’t need to worry so much” (p. 22). Similarly, in a study by Limberg et al., (2013), doctoral students “expressed that being a part of a cohort helped to create a vision of the future as a counselor educator” (p. 50). This vision was fostered by sharing expertise, experiences, and support throughout the doctoral process.

Consistently the sub-theme of external evaluation and validation from others emerged as a significant part of developing an identity as a counselor. This idea of receiving critical feedback from “experts” and even peers leads to questioning, self-reflections and ultimately learning. While this initially served to be anxiety laden with individuals experiencing a range of emotion, it was also cited as being a significant opportunity for growth. Receiving external validation was also critical in normalizing feelings of uncertainty and building confidence. One study succinctly acknowledged that feelings of competence began with feedback and validation from others (Henderson et al., 2006). Unique to the doctoral population studied is the importance of interactions with the masters students that the doctoral students taught and supervised, and being seen as a counselor educator by others. One doctoral participant referred to a time when a student asked for a meeting after class, “I think that was really significant...that she saw me in the role of a counselor educator. That kind of bolstered the way I viewed myself and gave me more confidence” (Dollarhide et al., 2012, p. 144). The importance of being seen as a

counselor and counselor educator by others crossed both masters and doctoral training levels.

**Growth.** The analytic theme Growth represents both personal and professional growth. It was identified when individuals recognized that they had acquired skills, knowledge or awareness. One individual cited that the greatest learning experience was learning about herself, and that this knowledge would provide the confidence and competence needed when working with clients (Woodside et al., 2007). Similarly, in the study conducted by Nelson and Jackson (2003) a participant stated, “I gained a lot of insight about myself as well as how I might help others” (p. 7).

**Process related.** The analytic theme Process Related encompassed multiple processes. Overall, learning to become a counselor and developing a professional identity was characterized in every study as an ongoing process. This continuous process was a theme across all stages of counselor professional identity development; CITs, doctoral students, and practicing counselors.

Within this ongoing process, two distinct sub-processes were identified. One sub-process is the movement between conceptual and experiential learning. As CITs begin their training, it starts with learning theory and concepts in a classroom or structured setting. The learning process continues by applying knowledge in role plays, or in a practicum or an internship. This process is fluid and can cycle back and forth as CITs have experiences that require them to need more information, or to seek a better understanding of theory and concepts previously learned. This sub-theme is exemplified in the following quote, “Then I would come up against an experience that I didn’t

understand and [would] have to go back to the conceptual to try and understand it” (Auxier et al., 2003, p. 35).

The second sub-process is related to the idea that learning and growth are tied to external evaluation and validation with the ultimate goal of learning to self-evaluate and self-validate. This sub-theme is also prevalent with the doctoral student population. Doctoral students have already developed, to varying degrees, a counselor professional identity and must now transition to an identity of counselor educator. In this process the doctoral student relies on external evaluation/validation, until confidence is built and self-evaluation/validation occurs.

**Community.** The theme Community is defined as being part of a professional community. This theme was emphasized more with the population of counselors who had already finished a masters training program and were either practicing, or in a doctoral program (Dollarhide et al., 2012; Henderson et al., 2007; Limberg et al., 2013; Luke & Goodrich 2012; Mellin et al., 2011; Swickert, 1997). This is not a surprising discrepancy, given that CITs are still connected to a professional community by virtue of being in a training program. Doctoral student participants emphasized that presenting at conferences aided in thinking about themselves more as a counselor educator than a practitioner. One student cited the benefits of networking at professional conferences, “...attending conferences is really good...I’m able to see other professionals that have been successful going through what I am now. And get advice from them, to hear tips that they have about research or teaching...”, (Limberg et al., 2013, p. 50). For practicing counselors, membership to a professional organization would be a logical progression and provided a sense of connection and belonging to a greater community. Multiple references were

made to belonging to a professional organization, actively participating, and giving back in some way. Participants emphasized the importance of adhering to ethical codes sanctioned by the professional organization, and one study stated that most of the participants were members of the American Counseling Association and concurrent members of their respective state's professional organization (Swickert, 1997).

**Defining counseling.** Another theme that emerged was Defining Counseling. This theme is comprised of three sub-themes, evolving definition, defining the profession and differentiating. The sub-theme of an evolving definition was prevalent with both CITs and doctoral student populations. The evolving definition represented a movement from parroting definitions learned from text books and "experts" to gradually developing a more personal definition. For CITs the definition was the meaning of counseling, and for the doctoral students the definition was specific to becoming a counselor educator. The evolution of these definitions coincides with the development and progression of the CITs and doctoral student's professional identity.

The other two sub-themes were more directly related to the studies that focused on professional identity and not identity development (Mellin et al., 2011; Swickert, 1997). Defining of the profession consisted of describing what counseling is in concrete terms, such as the process of facilitating change, working with various populations, being a masters level profession, and the benefits of becoming a National Certified Counselor (NCC) and gaining licensure. Defining the profession also included the philosophical underpinnings of counseling of being preventative, holistic, and wellness oriented. The sub-theme of differentiating attempts to make a clear distinction between the profession of counseling and other helping professions such as social work and psychology. The

implications are that by distinguishing the counseling profession from other helping professions a better understanding of what counseling is can be gleaned. This seems to speak to the issue of collective identity within the counseling profession, which appears to be of greater interest to practicing counselors than those still in training. One participant stated, “We’ve been struggling to form an identity and much of my work and energy is spent trying to educate people, insurance companies, legislators, about who we are and what we do”, (Swickert, 1997, p. 4).

**Summary of thematic synthesis.** After conducting a thematic synthesis eight analytic themes emerged. What can be interpreted from these themes is that the development of professional identity may start prior to an individual entering training program. Early on, individuals cited being self-aware and having characteristics and values that seemed to be a good fit for counseling. Learning emerged as a major analytic theme. Emphasis was placed on experiential learning, along with receiving evaluation and validation from those perceived as experts. Additionally, engaging in questioning and self-reflection were paramount to learning and identity development process. Overall, becoming a counselor or counselor educator and developing a professional identity was determined to be an ongoing process that likely continues through the life span of a counselor’s career.

Additionally, practicing counselors have more of an interest with issues related to collective identity, highlighting a need to distinguish counselors from other helping professionals, in order to better define the counseling profession as a whole.

## **Conclusions and Implications**

This systematic review focused on the qualitative research of counselor professional identity development. This review characterized and, evaluated twelve studies and then synthesized their results to answer the question, “How does professional identity develop across counselor lifespan?” Below is a summary of the conclusions and implications for practice, training and future research drawn from this systematic review.

Conclusions drawn from the characterization of each article suggest that there has been a greater interest in the development of professional identity than in examining professional identity as a construct. Qualitative research on professional identity development of masters level CITs is the most prevalent research that has been conducted. This is reasonable given that the research indicates the formation of professional identity begins during training (Auxier et al. 2003; Brott & Myers, 1999; Gibson, et al. 2010) and that masters students are an accessible population to study. The second most studied population were those who had completed their training and were practicing. The research conducted with practitioners primarily focused on how their identity was developed and the contributing factors, but not on what their identity was or meant. Recent research has produced two studies on the identity development of doctoral level students in counselor education programs to better understand the transition from practitioner to educator. To date there has been no qualitative research focused on counselor educators. Further, given the counseling profession’s proclivity toward multicultural issues and competency, it is surprising that only one study examines the cultural and ethnic influences on the development of professional identity. Of further

interest is the lack of research on professional identity among and between the many counseling specialties.

Based on these conclusions the implications for future research and training are great. In order to gain a greater depth and breadth of knowledge of the topic of professional identity development, more research needs to be conducted to include various other constructs that may influence identity development. These other constructs could be, but not limited to, gender, sexuality, previous CITs experiences with work or personal counseling, impact of mentoring, and distance education. The professional identity of counselor educators is another population that should be studied. This population should have already formed a professional identity, as both a counselor and an educator, and it would be interesting to understand how this population's identity is used to foster the professional identity in future counselors. This research could provide fruitful information for training enhancement at a programmatic level.

The standards used for the evaluation of methods for each study identified six of the twelve articles as representing research that is credible and of good quality. Three of the criteria used for the critique seemed to be particularly challenging; research focus, researcher role and coherence. In conducting the research a majority of the researchers did not consistently meet face-to-face, observe, or engage with study participants for any significant length of time. This minimal interaction or engagement is counter to the tenets of qualitative research where a relationship is established and an intimate understanding of a person(s) experience is sought. In many instances when face-to-face interaction occurred, it was only one time. While a majority of the researchers mentioned the importance of self-reflection/awareness to better understand any bias that may exist or

personal understanding of the topic being studied, less than half went into any detail as to what their respective biases were. And finally, only half of the studies adhered to consistent epistemological assumptions and demonstrated coherence throughout the study. Issues with obtaining coherence were that few researchers explained why the methodology was selected and how it fit with the purpose of the research. The second issue was that several studies mixed methodologies without offering an explanation.

Based on this critique it appears that there is still work to be done with conducting qualitative research that is considered good quality and credible. Qualitative research is a time intensive task requiring a researcher to “get to know” the subjects being studied. Based on this small sample it appears that practical issues took precedence with phone interviews being conducted instead of observing the participants or spending time in their “natural environment”. Further, there could be a couple of reasons why many of the studies did not include discussion or details of the biases or assumptions held by the researchers. One possible explanation may be that researchers have difficulty veering away from quantitative research emphasized in their training and that still holds dominance in the research world. Another explanation could simply be due to the practicalities associated with needing to adhere to the limited space allotted when publishing research. Mixing methodological approaches was also prevalent among the studies reviewed. This could be a symptom of not fully understanding the tenants of qualitative research. Without proper training, it can be difficult to recognize that each methodology has its own epistemological assumptions that are more appropriate for certain research focuses, and have different methods for data collection and analysis. Regardless, it is a process of educating both the producers and consumers of research

about the value and purpose of qualitative research and how to produce a quality and credible study.

The third component of this review produced several overarching themes across all twelve studies through a comprehensive thematic synthesis. In total eight themes, Personality/Past Experience, Questions/Self-Reflection, Learning, External Influences, Growth, Process Related, Community, and Defining Counseling emerged. From these eight themes several conclusions can be derived. First, much of the literature points to the training program as the beginning of identity development as a counselor. However, several studies reviewed had participants that articulated the journey to become a counselor began prior to their academics. Participants stated that they already had personality characteristics and values that made them gravitate toward the profession, and a good “fit”. This insight might be of value when recruiting and selecting candidates for training programs, as well as positively impacting retention of the CITs.

Across all articles, reference was made to professional identity development as being ongoing process. The theme Learning was strong and emphasized the importance of experiential learning, especially for the doctoral student population. A powerful learning framework for developing professional identity involved receiving feedback and validation from others deemed as experts, being able to question the feedback received, and engaging in self-reflection. The implications of these conclusions are significant for training and research. To ensure the greatest learning opportunity for CITs as they develop their professional identity, training programs should be constructed to be highly experiential with evaluative feedback and validation interspersed throughout. It is also critical to provide an environment for CITs to be able to engage in questioning and self-

reflection. Specific to the doctoral population, experiential learning is most meaningful when it is associated to teaching, supervising, and research. These three areas are tied to being a counselor educator and are outside the already established professional counselor identity.

Specific to practicing counselors was the need to be part of a larger community and the ongoing quest for a collective counselor identity. What can be intuited from this is that once counselors are practicing, and have achieved a sense of identity as a counselor, attention is re-directed from self to the greater community. Concerns about the collective counselor identity seem to become increasingly important.

At the completion of this systematic review of literature, much was learned about the current state of qualitative research on counselor identity and identity development. This review revealed information that can be of value to counselor educators for their future training and research endeavors. Training programs and interactions, such as with supervision, can be enhanced to include key experiences that foster CITs professional identity development. From a research standpoint, several implications for future actions were brought forward that primarily address the identified gaps in the literature.

It is important to note that this review consisted of twelve articles, which by any standards would be considered a limited pool to draw from. However, despite the number of studies, what is indisputable is that professional identity and its development is a critical topic for the counseling profession and is an area ripe with opportunity for future research.

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## Chapter 3

Connecting With Others: How Doctoral Students Experience Their Professional Identity  
Development Within the Context of a Nontraditional (Hybrid)  
Counselor Education Program

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## Abstract

Professional identity development has been a much debated topic within the field of counseling. Considerable focus has been given to establishing a collective identity for the profession, and in understanding the professional identity development of counselors-in-training (CIT). Little attention has been given to the identity development of counselor educators and even less to how professional identity development may evolve in nontraditional educational formats. The purpose of this grounded theory study was to gain understanding of the professional identity development experience of doctoral students in a nontraditional, hybrid/blended, counselor education program. This study consisted of nine participants who were either current doctoral students in a hybrid counselor education and supervision program or who had graduated within twelve months of participating in the study. Each participant was interviewed three times and then a member check was conducted by email. Through the grounded theory analysis four main categories emerged including, *beginning hybrid doctoral program*, *learning how to be a counselor educator (CE)*, *connecting with others*, and *evolving sense of professional identity*. Connecting with others emerged as the central, or core, category because of its essential relationship to the professional identity experience of doctoral students in their hybrid programs. The hybrid learning environment, or context of this study, proved to be critical in fully understanding the professional identity development of the participants. This study provides a qualitative, descriptive view of the professional identity development process of doctoral students in a hybrid learning environment. The implications for counselor educators, training, and future research are discussed.

## Introduction

Establishing a professional identity for the counseling profession has been an ongoing topic for several decades. This topic has been surrounded by much controversy over the years, and it is clear that this is a critical topic in the evolution of the counseling profession (Gale & Austin, 2003; Calley & Hawley, 2008; Bobby & Urofsky, 2011; Davis & Gressard, 2011; Cashwell, Kleist, & Scofield, 2009; McLaughlin & Boettcher, 2009). Many steps have been taken to ensure that a collective professional identity is established and fostered in future generations of counselors. Both the American Counseling Association (ACA) and the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Programs (CACREP) have implemented initiatives, *20/20: A Vision for the Future of Counseling* and 2009 CACREP Standards respectively, in order to foster professional identity at a programmatic level for counselors-in-training (CITs) (Urofsky, 2008; Bobby & Urofsky, 2011; Davis & Gressard, 2011).

Standards have been set by CACREP for accredited programs to make sure CITs are taught by core faculty who have either graduated from a counselor education program, preferably CACREP accredited, or who have taught a minimum of one year in a CACREP program. These requirements are meant to increase the likelihood that those teaching CITs have a professional identity securely rooted in counseling, which in turn provides a greater opportunity for CITs to develop a counselor professional identity. A strong professional identity leads to good ethical practice (Corey, Corey, & Callanan, 2012; Granello & Young, 2012), and alleviates the potential for role confusion when working side by side with other professionals in the helping fields (Bobby & Urofsky, 2011; Gale & Austin, 2003; Gibson, Dooley, Kelchner, Moss & Vacchio, 2012;

Woodside, Oberman, Cole, & Carruth, 2007). This emphasis on the professional identity development of future counselors is also intended to ultimately cycle back to the greater counseling community and reinforce the collective identity.

Despite the established importance of this topic, surprisingly limited research has been conducted, and the research that has been done has overwhelmingly used qualitative methodologies (Auxier, Hughes, & Kline, 2003; Brott & Myers, 1999; Dollarhide, Gibson, & Moss, 2013; Gibson, Dollarhide, & Moss, 2010; Henderson, Cook, Libby, & Zambrano, 2006; Limberg, Bell, Super, Jacobson, Fox, DePue, Christmas, Young, & Lambie, 2013; Luke & Goodrich, 2012; Mellin, Hunt, & Nichols, 2011; Nelson & Jackson, 2003; Perry, 2012; Swickert, 1997; Woodside et al., 2007). The most researched population has been with masters level CITs on the development of their professional identity. This is not surprising given that research indicates identity development starts during training, and that this population is highly accessible (Auxier et al., 2003; Gibson et al., 2010; Nelson & Jackson, 2003; Perry, 2012; Woodside et al., 2007). The qualitative research on professional identity development conducted in the United States has centered on how identity is developed in CITs and what factors contribute to such development (Carrillo & Rubel, 2014). Given the limited focus of current research there are still many areas that have either been under studied or have yet to be examined.

An area that is under researched is doctoral students in counselor education programs as they develop an identity as counselor educators. While emphasis has been placed on CITs' experience, not as much attention has been given to the identity development of future counselor educators (CE) as they transition from practitioner to educator. These doctoral students will likely be the individuals teaching, supervising,

and will assume responsibility for the identity development of future masters level counselors. A systematic review of research shows that two qualitative studies on the professional identity development of doctoral students have been done (Dollarhide et al., 2013; Limberg et al., 2013). Both of these studies were conducted with doctoral students who were enrolled in traditional land based counselor education and supervision doctoral programs. These two studies emphasized the integration of multiple identities, specifically that of counselor/practitioner with educator, supervisor and researcher. A significant emphasis was placed on experiential learning in relation to teaching, supervision and research and on external influences such as relationships with cohort peers, faculty, and the students being taught or supervised by the doctoral students. These were the major factors that emerged from the two studies examining the identity development of counselor educators.

While it has been established that there are many areas related to professional identity development that remain unexamined, one significant area is the type of instructional/educational format used. Research suggests identity development begins in training (Auxier et al., 2003; Brott & Myers, 1999; Gibson et al., 2010). Exploring the various formats, such as online, hybrid or blended instruction, and how these different formats may affect professional identity development was a relevant research pursuit. This line of inquiry has even more meaning given the increasing number of educational programs across disciplines characterized as distance education. Sloan Consortium, a non-profit organization dedicated to e-Education, conducted a study that tracked online education in the United States from 2002-2013. Their report showed that online education is becoming increasingly part of the long-term strategy for educational

institutions (Allen & Seaman, 2014, p. 8). The report also indicated that during Fall 2012, students enrolled in at least one online course represented 33.5% of total enrollment (Allen & Seaman, 2014, p. 15). Distance education is clearly becoming a mainstream educational format. It is also clear that the counseling academy has embraced distance education. CACREP currently lists a total of nineteen online masters and doctoral level programs. This number may or may not include programs categorized as a hybrid or blended learning, as CACREP does not currently make a distinction between the different possible online learning formats.

The purpose of this study was to increase understanding of the experiences of doctoral students as they develop their professional identity as CEs. The context of this examination was within a nontraditional educational format. The specific research question addressed was, “How do doctoral students in nontraditional counselor education programs experience their identity development as counselor educators?” Existing studies provided a limited understanding of the professional identity development process of doctoral students who were transitioning to a CE identity. Additionally, there was little if any understanding how nontraditional educational formats impacted professional identity development. Nontraditional has been defined to include a hybrid or blended instructional model, which are programs that combine online and face-to-face instructional delivery where a substantial proportion of the content is delivered online. This format typically uses online discussions, and has a reduced number of face-to-face meetings (Allen & Seaman, 2014). For the remainder of this study, nontraditional learning will be referred to as hybrid learning.

This study was designed to address the identified gaps in the literature. The results from this study have implications for training, future research endeavors and serve to inform policy making.

### **Methodology**

This study employed a qualitative methodology to better understand the professional identity development process of doctoral students in a hybrid counselor education program. Corbin and Strauss (2008), state:

There are many reasons for choosing to do qualitative research, but perhaps the most important is the desire to step beyond the known and enter the world of participants, to see the world from their perspective and in doing so make discoveries that will contribute to the development of the empirical knowledge (p. 16).

This study sought to uncover the complexity, and inner experience of what it is like to develop a professional identity in a hybrid learning format from the unique perspectives of the participants.

Qualitative research has a diversity of methodologies available. For this study a grounded theory methodology was chosen. Grounded theory moves beyond description and generates a general explanation, or theory, about an experience or process. This theory is grounded in the data gathered from the participants and their respective experiences (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Creswell, 2007). Further, Creswell (2007) states that “grounded theory is a good design to use when a theory is not available to explain a process” (p. 66). Using a grounded theory method, the researcher was afforded an opportunity to better understand the process of professional identity development and what is needed to facilitate this process. The emergent theory of professional identity

development was grounded in the experiences of doctoral students in a hybrid counselor education program.

### **Researcher as Instrument**

A fundamental characteristic of qualitative research is that the researcher serves as the research instrument. Qualitative researchers do not ignore their own assumptions or biases, but instead engage in a process of reflexivity to better understand the lens through which the study will be conducted (Hoyt & Bhati, 2007, p. 203). Reflexivity is an ongoing process of reflection to increase self-awareness of biases related to the topic being studied and it requires the researcher to continually examine the potential influence identified biases may have on the research process (Corbin & Straus, 2008).

As the primary researcher for this study and a doctoral student in a CACREP hybrid counselor education and supervision program, the primary researcher engaged in memoing as a means of capturing thoughts related to an evolving theory, and to also track her emotional responses to the data being collected and analyzed. As part of the process of reflexivity, the researcher acknowledged being extremely curious about professional identity development of counselors, and equally interested in the ongoing discourse about the collective identity for the counseling profession. The researcher also acknowledged that she struggled with her own professional identity and at times felt disconnected from peers and faculty while in her hybrid program. The following biases were identified based on experience and review of the literature: 1) Experiential learning is a key component in developing professional identity; 2) Relationships with peers and faculty are important to identity development; 3) Doctoral students will already have an established counseling identity that will be integrated into a counselor educator identity.

## **Sampling**

Research participants were selected utilizing purposeful sampling. Purposeful sampling allowed the researcher to intentionally select individuals based on their knowledge and direct experience with the research problem and central phenomenon being studied (Creswell, 2007). For this study participants were doctoral students who had completed at least the first year of their hybrid counselor education doctoral program, or individuals who had graduated within 12 months of participating in this study. Additionally, participants needed to identify professionally as a counselor, and their masters level work needed to be in a counseling related field, i.e. clinical mental health, community, rehabilitation, school, or marriage and family.

To gain access to this population, the researcher contacted CE doctoral programs identified as hybrid instructional formats, and provided the program contacts with information regarding the study and respectfully requested that it be shared with their doctoral students, or recent graduates. Additional steps were taken to recruit participants by sending a recruitment email to two listservs, CESNET and COUNSGRADS. The target number of participants for this study was between eight and ten. Once potential participants made contact with the researcher, the researcher reviewed the qualifying criteria, informed consent, including confidentiality and its limitations, and ensured that the participants understood that participation was voluntary and that they could withdraw at any time.

Once participants were screened for eligibility and the verbal consent was gained, nine participants volunteered. The educational status of the participants ranged from being in their second year of their doctoral program to having just recently graduated

with their doctorate. Prior to entering their hybrid doctoral program each participant identified themselves as a counselor; four did not indicate a specialty, two stated they worked primarily with children or adolescents, one was a marriage and family practitioner, one was an addictions counselor, and one was a school counselor. Each participant was licensed in their respective state and the following licenses were held: 3 LPCP; 2 LMHC; 1 LMFT; 1 LPCC; 2 Dual LPC/LMFT. Geographically, there was representation from the North West, West, Mid-West, East, and South. Gender make-up of the participants was seven females and two males. Years working as a practicing counselor ranged from six to sixteen. Seven participants self-identified as White/Euro American, one self-identified as Hispanic/Latina/o and one identified as having a Mixed Race background. Given the limited number of hybrid doctoral counselor education and supervision programs that have been established, it was not surprising that the participants collectively came from only three different programs.

### **Data Collection**

While there are many methods available for data collection in qualitative inquiry, including observation, focus groups, and researcher reflection, these methods often play a secondary role to interviewing in grounded theory (Creswell, 2007, p. 131). Therefore the chosen method to collect data in this study was multiple semi-structured interviews with participants. Interview questions were designed to elicit in-depth descriptive responses from the participants regarding their experiences with developing their identity as counselor educators. The initial interview questions were reflective of the literature on professional identity development for the counseling profession and were sufficiently general to allow participants to fully articulate their experiences. The initial interview

questions were: (1) How would you describe your professional identity before entering this hybrid doctoral program in counselor education?; (2) What feelings do you have about your professional identity development process so far?; (3) Describe your experience of becoming a counselor educator while in this hybrid doctoral program?; (4) What critical experiences in your hybrid program have you had that have helped and hindered your professional identity development as a counselor educator?; (5) What critical experiences outside of your hybrid program have you had that have helped and hindered your professional identity development as a counselor educator?

Given the nature of a hybrid educational format, study participants were located throughout the United States. Therefore interviews were conducted by telephone. The researcher was cognizant about developing rapport with the study participants, given that the interviews were not conducted in the physical presence of one another. Rapport is a process by which the researcher gains trust and creates a comfortable environment that allows participants to fully share their experience (Whiting, 2008).

The initial interviews were approximately 45 minutes and were audio taped and transcribed. Additional interviews were of similar length and questions were derived from the process of theoretical sampling (See Appendices N and O to view questions for second and third interviews). The premise of theoretical sampling was that data collection and analysis worked together and what was learned from the first interviews, determined the questions asked in subsequent interviews (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). This process continued until no new data emerged, and saturation was reached (Creswell, 2007; Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Three rounds of interviews were sufficient to reach saturation.

## **Data Analysis**

Data analysis for this grounded theory study followed the procedures delineated by Corbin & Strauss (2008). These procedures consisted of three major phases: open coding, axial coding and selective coding (Creswell, 2007). As the interviews were conducted and transcribed, the researcher began the open coding process. Through this coding process categories began to emerge, which are units of related information that represent experiences, acts or events that are grouped and subsequently given a code or name. In vivo codes were used where possible. In vivo codes are codes that use the direct wording from the study participants and are used as a way to preserve the participants' meaning of their views and actions in the coding itself (Charmaz, 2006, p. 55). As the process progressed, categories were analyzed for sub-categories, or properties, that added specificity to each category.

Axial coding works closely with open coding and sometimes simultaneously. Axial coding is ultimately "the act of relating concepts/categories to each other" (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p. 198). Through this process relationships between properties and dimensions were identified, which served to better understand the interrelatedness of the categories. It was through the act of axial coding that the central category began to emerge. This central category was also the most frequently discussed in the data, and served as the foundation for the theory development (Creswell, 2007).

Selective coding was the final phase of the coding process and the theory was built around one central category or phenomenon. As analysis continued distinctions were made about the central category, the context, and how other categories, via their properties, influence and are influenced by the central category. This further entailed

generating propositions or statements that connected the categories and brought together a picture, or story, of the connectedness of categories in the theory (Creswell, 2007, p. 65).

Throughout the data analysis process, ongoing memos were written to detail the analytic process from initial coding to theory development. Constant comparison was utilized during the entire process as well, first by comparing data with data within the same interview or round of interviews, to comparing earlier interviews to later interviews (Charmaz, 2006, p. 54). Other steps taken to make meaning of the data and to also document the analytic process included the creation of an ongoing narrative that detailed the definitions of the categories, properties and dimensions as they evolved at each data collection point. The coded data from each of the three rounds of interviews was broken up and reorganized under the relevant category, property, and dimension to document how the data supported each area. Additionally, a separate brief narrative was then written representing each participant's story using the framework of the emergent theory of professional identity development. This exercise actualized the theory and further demonstrated that the theory was representative of each of the participant's experiences.

Throughout each stage of the analytic process diagrams were created to visually explain the relationships and interrelatedness of the categories, properties and dimensions as they evolved and were solidified into a theory of professional identity development.

### **Promoting Trustworthiness**

The concept of trustworthiness is significant, especially to the consumer of the research findings and outcomes. The consumer wants to know that the research being consumed is of good quality and credible for use in other research projects, for

implementation into practice, or for policy making (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Therefore, steps were taken to ensure the trustworthiness of the qualitative research by focusing on the following characteristics as defined by Lincoln & Guba (1985): credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. These four characteristics are perhaps the most known and accepted framework for assessing the trustworthiness of qualitative research (Hoyt & Bhati, 2007. p. 202).

The researcher promoted the credibility of this study through prolonged engagement, triangulation and member checking. Prolonged engagement was obtained by doing three interviews with participants over a period of approximately six months. Triangulation was accomplished through the interviews, a review of the literature, and conducting a member check. The study participants were sent a member check by email, and seven of the nine participants responded and affirmed that the emergent theory was representative of their respective experiences.

The researcher promoted the transferability of this study by providing the necessary “thick description” so that consumers of this research can make “judgments” as to whether the findings have transferability and use for their respective purposes (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 316). This was done by providing context to the study, providing rich description of the participants, without jeopardizing anonymity, and using participant quotes to support the findings.

In order to achieve both dependability and confirmability, maintaining an audit trail was employed. While audits for both of these characteristics are technically different, the researcher was diligent about maintaining and retaining the necessary documentation and materials for future examination. Lincoln and Guba (1985) indicate

that establishing an audit trail would include maintaining, raw data, data reduction and analysis products, data reconstruction and synthesis products, process notes, and materials related to dispositions made (p. 319-320). An ongoing narrative of the analytic process, including evolving definitions of categories, properties, and dimensions was maintained along with supporting data from each interview round.

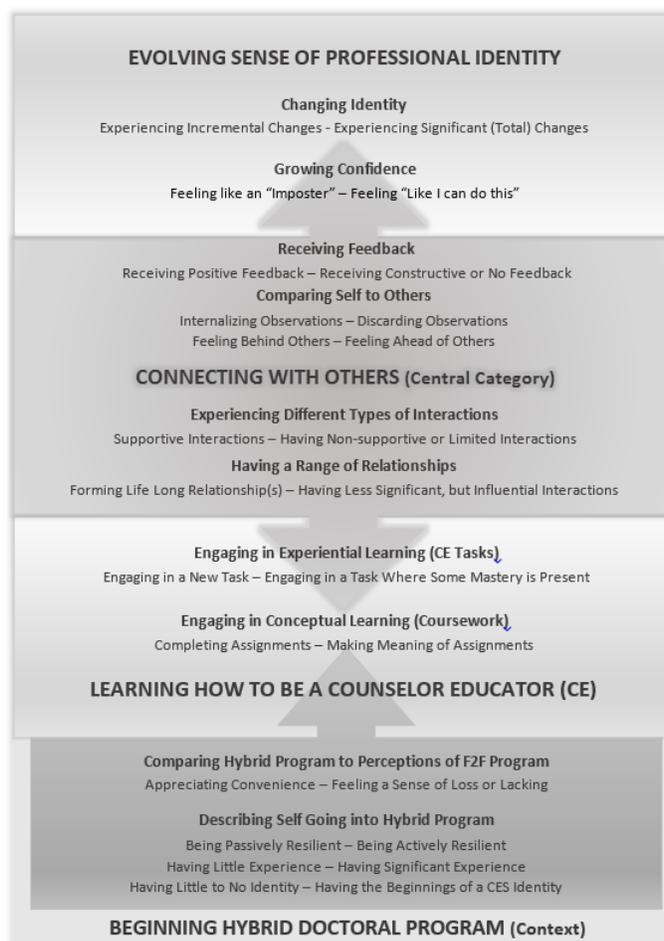
## **Results**

Emerging from the data was a theory delineating how nine participants experienced their professional identity development as counselor educators in a hybrid doctoral program. While the participants varied significantly in their geographic location, previous educational work, professional interests, and life circumstance, what developed from their collective data was a theory that encapsulated the nuances of each of their experiences as they developed their CE professional identity. The following represents a professional identity development theory that was grounded in the experiences of the study participants.

In following the prescribed analysis for a grounded theory study set forth by Corbin and Strauss (2008) four categories surfaced. These categories are *beginning hybrid doctoral program*, *learning how to be a CE*, *connecting with others*, and *evolving sense of professional identity*. Of particular importance are the categories of *beginning hybrid doctoral program*, as this represents the context in which the participants experienced their identity development, and *connecting with others*, which emerged as the central category of this theory. The context, or doctoral hybrid program, is significant because it creates a unique set of conditions in which the doctoral students experience their identity development as a CE. The central category, or core category, represents the

main theme of the research and is the category that all other categories are related to. It is through this category the research can be explained theoretically (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). The focal point of this theory rests on the ability of participants to connect with others in a variety of ways, throughout their hybrid doctoral program, as a means of learning how to be a CE and thereby developing their professional identity.

The overall theory, with emphasis on the central idea of *connecting with others* is represented in Figure 1. The identity development process begins at the bottom of the diagram and moves upward. As participants begin their hybrid program the context is defined and they experience the primary categories in various ways as their identity evolves. This figure outlines the interrelatedness between the categories, properties, and dimensions and emphasizes the process of CE professional identity development of doctoral students in a hybrid learning format.



*Figure 1.* Conceptual Diagram of the Categories, Properties, and Dimensions that Comprise the Professional Identity Development Experience of Doctoral Students in a Hybrid Counselor Education Program

### **Beginning Hybrid Doctoral Program (Context)**

According to Corbin and Strauss (2008) context is a set of conditions participants interact with, take action in or experience emotion about. In this instance, the context in which participants experienced their professional identity development was within a hybrid counselor education doctoral program. The very nature of a hybrid learning format suggests that participants learn course material primarily online with limited face-to-face interaction with faculty and other students. Much of the learning is done outside of the

program, and participants are responsible for finding both required and supplemental learning opportunities not generally provided by these type of programs.

Recognizing who the participants were upon starting their respective hybrid program was also part of the context. Participants entered their hybrid programs with varying degrees of experience, differing stages of identity, and held certain personal characteristics. Within this category/context two distinct properties emerged; *comparing hybrid program to perceptions of a face-to-face program* and *describing self going into hybrid program*.

**Comparing hybrid program to perceptions of a face-to-face program.** While many participants expressed their appreciation for the flexibility and accessibility of the hybrid program, they also wondered about the lack of regular contact with faculty and the loss of experiential learning opportunities such as teaching and supervision that are typically part of a traditional land based doctoral program. Several participants initially questioned the quality of their hybrid program, and wondered if others would see their experience as less than. These mixed feelings gave rise to the dimension of *appreciating the convenience – feeling a sense of loss or lacking*. Participant 5 (P5) expressed her appreciation for the flexibility of hybrid program in that she did not have to uproot her family, and she saw her peers “going on huge overseas trips and having babies and having surgeries and getting jobs, and moving across the country and doing all of these, you know, remarkable life events and still being able to continue with the process”. Participants also expressed feeling disconnected, or isolated because of the lack of regular face-to-face interaction. In contrast, Participants 1 (P1) expressed the following:

I still think that when you don't have that day to day contact it, you lose something, especially for this type of profession where its known for having that

contact and being able to build cohesiveness, you know, with the people that you're working with.

**Describing self going into hybrid program.** Through the data analysis it became clear that who the participants were prior to entering their hybrid doctoral programs influenced their experience as they developed their professional identity. Participants started their respective doctoral hybrid programs with varying degrees of counselor identity formed and a variety of professional experience established. Participants also stated having some form of resiliency as a personal characteristic. These three aspects of who a participant was prior to entering their hybrid program is represented with the following dimensions; *having little experience – having significant experience, having little to no identity – having the beginning of a CE identity, and being passively resilient – being actively resilient.*

*Having little experience – having significant experience* primarily represented the range of experience participants had with tasks that are typically associated with being a CE. These CE tasks were defined as teaching, supervising, leadership and conducting research. While all of the participants were licensed counselors in their respective states and had considerable clinical experience, some of the participants also had experience with teaching at a college/university, supervision, and being in a leadership position within a professional community. Participants ranged from having no previous counselor educator experience, to having significant experience, specifically with teaching and supervising. This experience, or lack of experience, directly impacted the identity development process for each participant. Participant 9 (P9) shared that she “hadn’t done any supervision” and “had never taught anything” prior to entering her hybrid program. This lack of experience made her feel behind in her development compared to her peers.

In contrast, some participants who did not have prior CE experience also indicated that because of the lack of experience, they felt more open to the learning that was occurring. P5 exemplified this when she said, “I think the fact that I hadn’t had any real experience with supervision or teaching...possibly made me more open to the experience, because I didn’t have a whole lot of preconceived ideas about how I should show-up”. On the other end of the continuum, Participant 6 (P6) stated that he had “probably ten years” experience teaching as an adjunct faculty, as well as significant supervision experience, and Participant 7 (P7) had part-time teaching experience at a university, and was an “active clinical supervisor” before entering her hybrid program.

Participants began their hybrid doctoral program with varying degrees of their professional counselor identity formed. This range of identity was represented with the dimension of *having little to no identity – having the beginning of a CE identity*. Most of the participants expressed a singular identity such as “counselor”, “clinician”, “school counselor” or an “addictions counselor”. However, P7 stated that she “didn’t really have a defined identity at all, it was just kind of a particular work ethic and expectations” she placed on herself. On the other end of the continuum P6, who had ten years prior been in a land based CE doctoral program and had significant experience with teaching and supervision before starting his hybrid program stated, “I’ve also really enjoyed presenting and teaching in a masters counseling programs...I was identifying primarily with a counselor and I, and I even teach as a counselor who likes to teach”. P6’s significant experience with teaching was already moving his identity toward a CE identity. Other information provided by the participants included the various populations they worked

with, a few mentioned their theoretical orientation, such as humanistic, CBT, and solution focused, but in general the identity described was very singular.

The last dimension that emerged within this property was *being passively resilient* – *being actively resilient*. Participants cited having personal characteristics that they could draw from that moved them forward in their hybrid program and with their professional identity development. While descriptions of these characteristics varied, most centered on some form of resiliency. Resiliency ranged from passive to active as participants described themselves as having the ability to have fun with the process, “being laid back”, flexible, adaptable, being “self-motivated”, “committed”, “stubborn”, “tenacious”, and having persistence. Having these characteristics prior to entering the program helped participants not quit or take a break when they were tired and/or frustrated. P7 stated that “resilience, in terms of kind of bouncing back and recovering from that frustration would be a good summary of my experience”. Similarly, P9 stated:

I’m really...stubborn and tenacious, but I used that to get through the program, because there are so many barriers and it’s so difficult like, why not quit at any point and time? There’s a whole lot of other things that I could do with my time and money or whatever, you know, I kind of have to be a little bit committed to it to get through...and I think that that’s been helpful, overall.

Several participants cited that they had witnessed other individuals not make it through a hybrid program because they did not possess some form of resilience.

### **Learning how to be a CE**

Another category to emerge from the data was learning how to be a CE, which involved learning new information from course content, and engaging in practical learning activities. Two significant properties emerged within this category; *engaging in conceptual learning (coursework)* and *engaging in experiential learning (CE Tasks)*. It is

a combination of these various learning opportunities that moved the participants forward in their professional identity development.

**Engaging in conceptual learning (coursework).** Upon entering their hybrid program participants began the process of learning how to be a CE through conceptual learning. A few participants cited that just being in the program made them feel more like a CE and gave them a sense of pride. The range of experience that participants cited having is represented in the dimension of *completing assignments – making meaning of assignments*. Conceptual learning entailed engaging in coursework, usually starting online. The coursework provided information about the history of the counseling profession, the meaning of professional identity, exposure to theory, and guidance about APA writing style. Participants completed assignments as part of their program requirements, and in some instances these assignments inspired them to make meaning about how new knowledge could be applied to practice. Participant 3 (P3) commented on the impact conceptual learning had on his identity development when he said “I think the first time I really felt that I could be a CES was actually in one of my research classes where it was the quantitative research methods”. P7 stated the following:

I think what contributed most to my professional identity throughout the program were some really, really well- crafted assignments that...really implored me to utilize some of the theories that we had discussed in class and really apply them to my own practice and how I would do things . So, for example, one assignment that I remember completing was a clinician disclosure and supervisor disclosure and while I had done those for my professional work in the past, I never spent a lot of time really thinking about theories and just the fact that it was an academic assignment. We had to provide references throughout our disclosure, so it was really the first time that I...was very, very thoughtful about how theory applied to my practice.

Similarly, P9 stated that conceptual learning helped her to prepare for her experiential learning, “so through the course work, I felt like I was picking up stuff that would be

useful ...and now I have on the horizon actually teaching... It's been helpful and just the general how to of it." Conceptual learning helped professional identity development by providing context about the profession in general, it explained the various roles of a CE, and set the foundation for experiential learning.

**Engaging in experiential learning (CE tasks).** Experiential learning is critical to the professional identity development experience within the context of a hybrid learning format. Experiential learning was defined as engaging in tasks that are typically associated with being a CE; teaching, supervision, leadership, and scholarship. These activities could be part of course requirements, such as with practicum and internship, or outside of the program requirements as supplemental learning. However, due to the nature of a hybrid program, a majority of these tasks were mostly performed outside of the participant's hybrid program and it was the responsibility of the participant to locate these opportunities. P5 stated "everything that was so transformative for me seemed to happen outside of the classroom". P9 echoed the sentiment by stating, "it's not just in the program that I'm gaining some identity development it's outside of there as well it's at my work setting and then, in doing some teaching and training and conferences, like, outside of related school". Participants indicated that by doing these tasks they were able to apply conceptual knowledge and skills they had observed others doing, such as peers and faculty, and it also gave them a sense of being a CE.

Considering the varying degrees of professional experience participants had prior to entering their respective doctoral programs, the dimension that emerged from this property was *engaging in a new task – engaging in a task where some mastery is present*. This dimension represents participants engaging in CE tasks that were new experiences to

them and CE tasks that had been previously performed, where some mastery existed. Participants engaged in new learning that included teaching, supervising masters level students, attending and presenting at relevant conferences, engaging in leadership opportunities, and writing and publishing. These new experiences held a steeper learning curve for those who had no familiarity in these areas. P3 shared his experience when he was paired up with a faculty member to teach master level students for the first time:

When I got there, it was very humbling, because the way she structured it as, you know, a professor was the whole course kind of aligned with her therapeutic kind of background... [I] felt embarrassed and like, oh my gosh, you know, how is it that I'm a Ph.D. student and I can't even grasp this little applications of this theory?... it really made me kind of shift and see how different professors do different things and you know teach different classes

Participants also cited that engaging in experiential learning, whether it was a new experience or not, furthered the professional identity development. P1 stated “Working as an instructor through my internships and things like that I really began to...associate more with counselor educators”.

### **Connecting with Others (Central Category)**

*Connecting with others* emerged as the central category of this theory as it was a pivotal experience for participants as they developed their professional identity as a CE. Given the inherent limited face-to-face interaction in a hybrid program, participants unanimously stated that having any type of face-to-face interaction was critical to their professional identity development experience. Some participants emphasized that connecting with others was a way of putting their experiences into context and stated that it made their experiences more “real”. Within the hybrid program making these connections meant forming relationships without having regular interactions. One participant cited that it was moderately difficult to maintain relationships, but necessary,

while a few others gave accounts of fostering relationships without ever meeting someone face-to-face, or meeting them a few times. P1 commented on her relationship with her mentor, “I can honestly tell you that our relationship is incredible and I have only physically met her twice”.

This category encompassed everything from forming and maintaining long term relationships to interacting in an informal way, such as with networking. It also included making self-comparisons to faculty and peers and the act of receiving feedback. Four distinct properties emerged from this central category; *having a range of relationships*, *experiencing different types of interactions*, *comparing self to others*, and *receiving feedback*.

**Having a range of relationships.** A key component to identity development was forming significant, long term relationships with faculty and fellow students, or having less significant, but still influential, relationships with other professionals and peers. This was represented in the dimension of *forming life-long relationships – having less significant, but influential interactions*. One of the types of relationships that emerged as being critical were those that were described as mentor relationships. Most of the participants, explicitly or implicitly, described having a mentor or somebody that was a role model and a person they could go to with questions, concerns, or ideas about their professional identity development. P1 emphasized the importance in having a mentor because she was in a hybrid program with this statement:

Part of it was getting a mentor to kinda bounce stuff off of and to be, to develop a relationship with, that could help me, and I believe that I needed that because I was in the program I was in.

Another significant relationship that was described in the data was relationships with cohort members. Relationships with their cohort, or fellow students, gave participants the opportunity to share their current experiences with those who are having the same experiences. P5 summed up her relationship with some of the individuals in her cohort.

She stated that her:

Cohort mates...are life-long friends as a result of this process...is just such a rich piece for me and when there's that sense of being in a relationship with somebody, you don't want to disappoint those people and want to continue on the journey with them and so...to be able to talk to others who are, you know, experiencing or have experienced similar challenges is also supportive of, you know, pulling on the resilience to be able to finish.

A few participants also expressed these relationships exposed them to the other specialties within the counseling profession. This exposure highlighted the differences and the commonalities across the specialties, work environments, and geography, and increased the understanding of the counseling profession and their own evolving professional identity.

In the absence of a formal cohort, a few participants formed informal cohorts that lent support to each other throughout the program. P6 described the importance of the informal cohort that he formed with other students when he stated:

We formed a...not a formal cohort, but an informal cohort ...I sort of rode that out to this point...it's been vital to just hanging in there...grinding out a Doc program like you have to do.

Additionally, participants cited that just the interaction with others, either during face-to-face class time, at conferences, or in other professional settings was necessary and beneficial to their professional identity development. P9 sums up her experience going to her first Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES) conference here:

That was a really great experience because I got to be around so many other people who do that, like that's what they do, they're counselor educators and supervisors and, you know, learning stuff from the conference sessions and then also just being around people who are really like, really happy that this was my first ACES and, like, happy that I was a doc student and so welcoming to the profession.

Collectively, these interactions led to participants feeling supported, gave a sense of belonging, helped to normalize experiences, and provided context to their identity development as a CE.

**Experiencing different types of interactions.** This property focused not on the type of relationship forming, but the range of interactions occurring within those relationships. The dimension for this property is *having positive and supportive interactions – having non-supportive negative or limited interactions*. Experiencing positive interactions with others led to participants feeling validated, encouraged and provided a sense of belonging. These feelings were expressed in various ways by all of the participants. Participant 8 (P8) expressed the importance of having supportive interactions with one of her mentors:

She supported me through that...she cared to listen and helped me to know that what I was doing was important to her...I could send her an e-mail question, I even picked up the phone...and called her and just cause I needed to talk and needed somebody to say "you're going make it".

These positive interactions provided participants with a sense of belonging as they forged relationships, interacted with others, and attended conferences.

Conversely, a few participants cited times that they did not feel supported because there was either limited or negative interaction with others. It was also noted that professional identity development was hindered when participants did not have an opportunity to interact, or had negative interactions. Several participants expressed that

not having interactions regularly with individuals who were going through the same thing, i.e., a hybrid CE doctoral program, hindered their professional identity development. P3 summed up his experiencing of feeling isolated, “I’m going through all these you know classes, going through all this process, going through a these internal changes...and no one around me that I can have a conversation with really understands or identifies with what I’m going through”. Additionally, over half the participants cited that negative interactions with faculty, peers, or other professionals was a hindrance to their identity development as well. P1 reflects on a negative interaction with a faculty member that she characterized as a personality conflict, “I needed to rely on this person for a grade, I needed to rely on her to teach me, but everything that she did that hindered me, also taught me what I wouldn’t want to do to somebody else”. P4 described a negative experience she had with fellow students, “it was like four of these students...the best way to say it, is, they were kind of like snobby, they thought they were better than anybody else and they were really quite rude, that was not a positive experience.”

**Comparing self to others.** Comparing self to others emerged as a significant property within the category of *connecting with others*. This property gave rise to two dimensions; *feeling behind others – feeling ahead of others* and *internalizing observations – discarding observations*. The dimensions *feeling behind others – feeling ahead of others*, focused mostly on those participants who were in a hybrid doctoral program that had a formal cohort built in. Many of these participants cited that the ongoing relationship with peers promoted comparison as a means of gaging progress in their CE identity development. P5 cited feeling this, “low level competition that goes on conceivably in the cohort process itself,” and wondering, “do I measure up, am I smart

enough, am I good enough?” P7 expressed looking around the room at her peers and realizing, “I know what I’m talking about, my experience that I’ve had is valid...I understand how these concepts and theories...can be applied to the professional world, which other members of my cohort really didn’t seem to understand”. P9 compared herself to others outside of her cohort when she attended an ACES conference and felt validated when she saw she was similar to those who were already in the CE role.

The dimension of *internalizing observations – discarding observations* resonated with participants who expressed comparing themselves to faculty or others and wanting to be like them. P1 shared her experience observing a faculty member teach, “I watched her and I remember looking at her and thinking I want to be like, I want to be able to teach counseling the way she does”. Part of this dimension also includes the opportunity to assess behaviors, skills, and techniques and discard them if they did not fit within the professional identity framework being developed by the respective participant. Some participants expressed that watching faculty teach, provided an opportunity to assess techniques and skills, which helped learn how to teach. P5 summed this up when she explained, “witnessing effective teaching techniques... experiencing teachers that I felt communicated the material in a way that made rich and integratable, and then... witnessing some teachers that, some instructors that, professors that were less than dynamic”. P8 stated part of her identity development experience was “getting to know the professors and learning what their particular, you know, theoretical views are and you know, does that fit with what I do, or does it not”. Observing and comparing self to others helped participants better understand how to be a CE.

**Receiving feedback.** Receiving feedback from others, such as from faculty or other professionals, was cited by all study participants as having a critical impact on the identity development process. For the purposes of this study, feedback was defined in the broadest of possible ways. The range of feedback included very direct and formal feedback given from a faculty member to participant in an evaluative way, it was also less formal, still from faculty member, but non-evaluative. Feedback was from peers during interactions and also received in the most informal way when going to a conference or a residency and feeling welcomed into the environment. Feedback was also indirect such as when getting asked to teach a class and then being asked to return again, or being asked to take on more responsibility. The range of feedback was dimensionally represented as *receiving positive feedback – receiving constructive or no feedback*.

Through receiving positive feedback participant's gained confidence in their skills and abilities, which progressed their identity development. P5 expressed her experience when she received student evaluations, "I went into it not wanting to be...the popular teacher, but the teacher that helps them learn and getting that kind of feedback from students was really rich and validating experience for me". Positive feedback validated participant's growth and skills. Constructive feedback led to feeling "humbled", but primarily led to participants being self-reflective, and understanding that learning is a "lifelong process". P9 gave an example of constructive feedback given to her by a faculty member about her participation in class. This feedback lead P9 to be reflective about her overall identity process, "it was really transferable to my overall development to becoming an educator and supervisor and what I thought about my authority to say something...So that was a really impactful interaction". Conversely, feedback that was

perceived as being placating or as not authentic hindered identity development. It was also mentioned that feedback was critical in a hybrid program with developing as a CE, since face-to-face interaction is limited. P1 emphasized the importance of feedback when she stated, “I think it assures you, or gives you that added confidence that you know you can actually do this, and I think it is really necessary in a hybrid program because you don’t have that constant contact with professors.”

### **Evolving Sense of Professional Identity (Internal Experience)**

From the beginning and throughout the program participants expressed varying degrees of development with their professional identity as a CE. This category was broken down into the properties of *growing confidence* and *changing identity*. These two properties represent the process of participants gaining confidence through various activities and interactions, as their professional identity as a CE evolves incrementally or in total.

**Growing Confidence.** The range of confidence that participants expressed having as their identity, or aspects of their identity changed, included feeling like an “imposter”, having “self-doubt”, and “anxiety”, being “inept”, “unprepared”, and nervous, and feeling thoughts of “hopefulness”, and that “I can do this”. P1 expressed the following:

I remember really feeling inept...and unprepared to teach and...but I also remember getting to that point where I felt like, okay I can do this, it’s not as hard as I, I need to not be so hard on myself...I feel very comfortable with it now, but I remember not being comfortable with it.

These varying states of confidence were mostly tied to starting the program and trying new CE tasks that participants did not have significant experience with prior to starting their hybrid program. Growing confidence increased as experience was gained and feedback was received. P6 exemplifies this with his comment, “I have presented, oh eight

or ten times with my colleagues there, I think that is really enhanced my confidence in my ability to continue”. P9 also shared how her confidence grew as she got feedback from a professional organizations, “I just got...two conference proposals accepted at WACES and so that’s kind of boosting my confidence about it, that other people will see me as potentially an equal or having something to say.”

**Changing Identity.** Most of the participants describe a moment or a series of experiences when they could sense their identity changing. Words used to describe this evolution of their identity were “hatching”, “transitioning”, “evolving” and as a “turn”. The dimension that emerged within this property was *experiencing incremental changes – experiencing significant (total identity) changes*. Incremental changes to the total identity development generally focused on the various roles associated with being a CE; an educator, a supervisor, a leader or a researcher. P3 shares a moment when he felt the supervisor part of his evolving CE identity start to change:

I started identifying with that like mentor kind of like educator or supervisor I not even quite sure, because I wasn’t technically their supervisor and I technically was not like their boss or anything but...you know I became more that mentor role and people just kept coming to me and asking me questions... and I found like myself falling into a lot more of those kind of roles on the outside, that later on I could tie in...you know, as I was like, progressing and I guess my identity was changing.

P5 shares a similar moment when she was aware that the teaching role of her CE identity was evolving, “Well it was pivotal in that I had not even thought of myself as necessarily a counselor educator, ah...supervisor, yes, but not a counselor educator... that piece of my professional identity was newly hatched”. These small changes that occurred as part of the evolving identity and were again often associated with experiential learning and receiving some form of feedback. Participants also communicated that they sensed that

their overall identity was changing. P9 expressed a moment when she felt herself becoming a CE as she engaged in experiential learning, “I think...somehow I have internalized it and then gotten to the point where I actually am teaching and feel like yes, I’m in the midst of actually being a counselor educator”. Additionally, P8 shared her story of her transitioning identity:

At that point there were students who were looking to me for education, whereas, prior to that I was the one looking to my instructors for education. So I sorta, I did switch roles, well at that point, I was still the student, I was also becoming a counselor educator... On the other side it’s like, wow, I really did that! I did change and yea, here I am now.

Additionally, participants who had some experience or mastery with CE tasks, such as teaching and supervising, had less dramatic changes in their professional identity development because they were already taking on some of these roles.

### **Significant Interactions and Processes**

The results of this study reflect not only the formation of categories, properties and dimensions, but also show how each of these has influence over, or are influenced in some way by each other. These influences are manifested through the various interactions and processes that occur between these categories, properties and dimensions. These interactions or processes, like threads, are woven together and illustrate the professional identity development experience conveyed by the study participants.

Within the emergent professional identity development theory there are many interaction and process threads that hold significance, but there are a few that are critical to understanding the overall experience of the participants. These significant process threads are directly tied to the context, *beginning hybrid doctoral program* and the central category of *connecting with others*. The following interaction and process thread focuses

on *connecting with others* within the context of a hybrid doctoral CE program. This example follows one participant's experience as her identity evolved from practitioner to educator.

This example starts with the context and focuses on who the participants were as they began their hybrid program. While all of the participants expressed the need for some form of resiliency to successfully navigate a hybrid program, P5 shared how being resilient played an important part in her experience:

The hybrid program is not warm and fuzzy and nurturing in and of itself, I think you can create opportunities for that, but it's not particularly...supportive process all by itself so, it really calls upon someone's own, again, internal fortitude, strength and resilience to be able to finish the whole entire process.

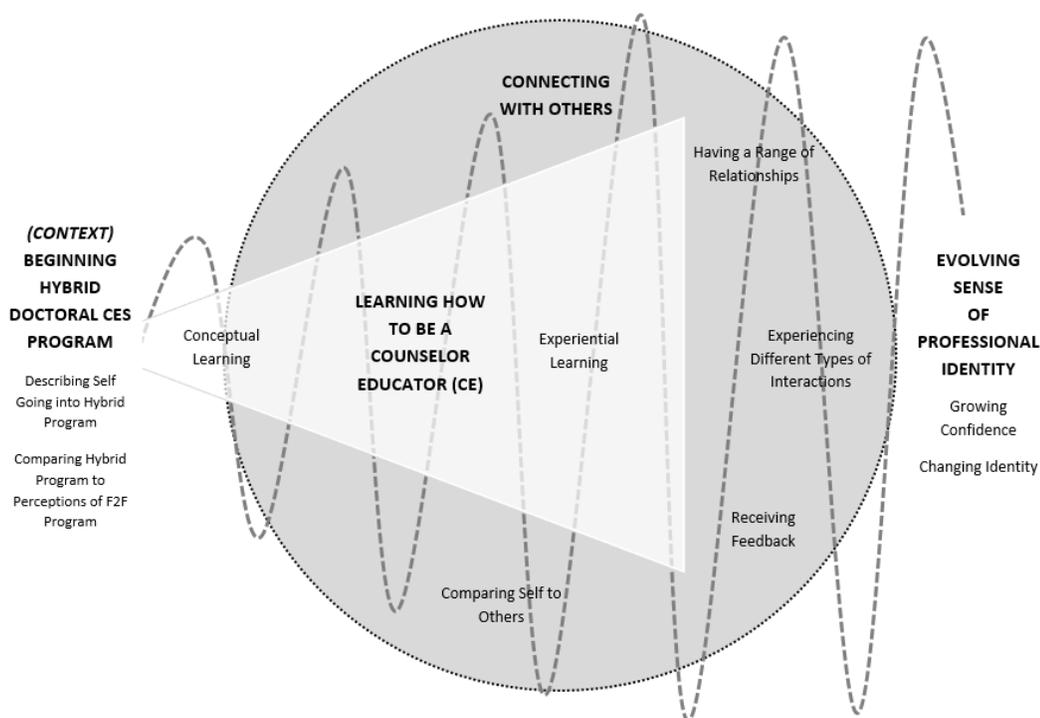
In this quote P5 specifically talks about her resiliency and how she drew from it to continue on. It also exemplifies the need to take responsibility for her own experiences within the context of this type of learning environment. P5 goes on to highlight the importance of having connections with others to gain experiential learning opportunities when learning to be a CE. In the following quote she also emphasized that the responsibility of securing these opportunities rested solely with her:

Again the realization, oh my gosh I have to teach and then thinking about the least painful way to go about that and recognizing that probably my alma mater for my masters program might be the most welcoming for that opportunity, since I had relationships with them, so it was scary but it felt doable to put myself forward as a possible, adjunct professor for them.

In this quote the participant also demonstrates the anxiety felt when engaging in a CE task not previously done or mastered. The same participant goes on to share the how connecting with others provided her with needed feedback that helped her feel validated and progressed her identity development as a CE. The following quote illustrates this sentiment:

First of all that the school [alma mater], in particular would let me teach for the first time and then actually invite me back, was profoundly impactful in that, oh well, I must have been good enough... again, feedback from...my advisor and from then all the way through to when she finally got around to writing my letter of recommendation, the things she said about me were absolutely amazing...that was so validating and then the first time I got the student evaluations when I taught a class on my own and that was you know a huge vulnerability and a huge reinforcement that at least some of the things that I was doing...they were actually working, so that was very validating as well.

Together these experiences articulated by P5 show a significant interaction and process thread that is pivotal to the professional identity development experience of all the participants. This thread began within the identified context of this study; *beginning hybrid doctoral program*. Participants tapped into their resilience in order to navigate their respective programs and made connections with others to obtain experiential learning opportunities. Following this thread, participants received feedback that helped with their growing confidence, thereby affecting their evolving identity as a CE. While Figure 2 represents the total interactions and processes of the emergent theory of professional identity development of doctoral students in a CE hybrid program, the significant thread just detailed can also be traced.



*Figure 2:* Diagram Demonstrating the Dynamic Process of CE Professional Identity Development of Doctoral Students in a Hybrid Counselor Education Program

## Discussion

The aim of this grounded theory study was to understand the experiences of doctoral students in hybrid counselor education programs as they developed their professional identity as CEs. In addition to seeking a better understanding about the general experience of professional identity development, it was also important to recognize and acknowledge the nuanced experiences of each of the participants. The process of analyzing and making meaning of the data to uncover a generalized theory, while honoring the unique story of each participant was undertaken with consideration and care. With that stated, a theory of CE professional identity development within a hybrid doctoral program grounded in the experiences of the study participants emerged. This section will review how this study fits within and contributes to the growing pool of

literature on professional identity, identifies the limitations of the study, and the implications for counselor educators, supervisors, researchers and students.

The primary categories that developed, *beginning hybrid doctoral program (context)*, *learning how to be a CE*, *connecting with others (central category)*, and *evolving sense of professional identity*, are in several ways complimentary to the results of the previous two qualitative studies on professional identity development of counselor education doctoral students in traditional land based doctoral programs (Dollarhide et al., 2013; Limberg et al., 2013). Incorporated within their findings, these two studies cited the importance of experiential learning, and relationships with others (Dollarhide et al., 2013; Limberg et al., 2013), which were significant contributors to the professional identity formation of the participants of this study. In the Dollarhide et al. (2013) study the researchers cite within the visual representation of their theory that “confidence comes with experience, and legitimacy comes from positive feedback from faculty” (p. 146). Limberg et al. (2013) stated in their study that faculty influence is important to the development of future counselors, implying the importance of those relationships. While this current study parallels these previous studies in some regards, there is one salient difference that permeates the overall experience of the participants of this study; the context of a hybrid learning environment.

A hybrid learning environment is not inherently conducive to ongoing and consistent access to faculty, peers, and others in the professional community. This dynamic has a direct bearing on how relationships are formed, feedback is received, and experiential learning is obtained. These interactions all contribute to growing confidence and professional identity development. Connecting with others takes intention, effort and

resiliency on part of the participants. The significance of making connections with others becomes magnified in the absence of regular contact with faculty and peers. Participants unilaterally cited connecting with others as the most important factor in their professional identity development. P9 offered written feedback as part of the member check process that summarizes this point:

Entering the program I never would have thought that connections would be such a key piece of the experience and my professional identity development. I considered the program something that would add to my skill set and make additional professional opportunities available. I never realized how difficult and transformative the process would be and how heavily I would need to rely on my connections with others to grow, understand my skills better, and see myself differently.

Further, in traditional land based programs it is common for experiential opportunities to be available in the form of either teaching or supervising masters level CITs. In a hybrid program, obtaining experiential learning opportunities for the most part were the sole responsibility of the participants, which typically requires establishing relationships with others. Obtaining these experiential opportunities at times created added stress, required initiative, and sometimes creativity. The hybrid learning format was an integral part of each of the participant's experience as they developed their professional identity as a CE.

There were three identified researcher biases that were derived primarily from the literature. Two of these biases, the importance of building relationships and experiential learning in the professional identity development process, were found to be significant factors for the participants of this study. Again, while these findings coincide with previous research, there were some distinctions in the participants experience based on the hybrid learning context. The third identified bias suggested that doctoral students entering their respective hybrid program would already have an established counseling

identity. Results for this study indicated that the status of participant's identities ranged from not having an identity, to having a singular identity, to already beginning to develop a CE identity. What seems to have been a greater contributor to the professional identity development process for participants is the amount of experience related to CE tasks each had and their degree of mastery prior to starting the hybrid doctoral program. Participants entered their hybrid program as seasoned counselors, with several of them already working in a CE capacity by either teaching, supervising, or both. These varied experiences, backgrounds and characteristics, all contributed to who the participant was as they entered their hybrid program, and are a critical piece in how each of them experienced their identity development overall.

### **Limitations of the Study**

There are a few limitations within this grounded theory study worth noting. The first limitation is that the interviews were not conducted in person. However, the researcher was cognizant of this and took the necessary time throughout the data collection process to establish rapport with each participant. It should be noted that given the participants experience in a hybrid doctoral program, they were accustomed to forming relationships at a distance and the phone interviews for this study appeared to be comfortable and seamless.

Though the sample size was nine participants, which may be considered small, the researcher provided rich descriptions, and a thorough account of the context, so that consumers of the research can make their own judgment about the transferability of the study.

Due to the limited number of hybrid doctoral CE programs established, participants came from only three programs, one of which the researcher was enrolled. However, the researcher did not previously know any of the participants, though she did have familiarity with their program and faculty. This issue might be considered to create biases that would unduly hinder the outcome of this research study. However, by engaging in a reflexive process, the researcher was cognizant of her theoretical sensitivity to the data, had a solid understanding of the lens in which she looked through and was careful not to assume the participant's experiences were similar to hers. The researcher has every confidence that by conducting a thoughtful, reflective, and thorough investigation these possible limitations were mitigated.

### **Implications**

This grounded theory study has many implications for training, future research and policy making. These implications can be broken down into the different groups that they directly affect; counselor educators/supervisors, researchers, and students.

**Counselor educators/supervisors.** Implications for counselor educators and supervisors focus primarily on enhancing training programs and interactions in a way that fosters professional identity development within a hybrid learning environment. In particular, the results of this study suggest that incorporating opportunities within training for students to interact and build/maintain relationships with faculty and peers would be beneficial. This seems to be an important component for solidifying the experiences and making them seem more real. This could be accomplished by establishing formal mentor programs and utilizing a cohort model. Cohort relationships were frequently cited as being important and influential to the identity development process. In some instances,

absent a cohort, an informal cohort was formed, emphasizing the need for this type of relational support. Another important component would be to find ways to integrate experiential learning into the hybrid program, or at least have well developed tools and resources that can help doctoral students in their efforts to secure these opportunities. Further, given the significance of feedback, it would be important for both counselors and supervisors to ensure that feedback is provided regularly and in a variety of ways; in person, through writing, or utilizing technology, such as with video conferencing. This could also go a long way in fostering relationships between faculty/supervisors/mentors and students. Additionally, recognizing that many of the individuals attracted to a hybrid program will bring with them a diversity of experience can be useful information for counselor educators, as well as supervisors. With this understanding counselor educators and supervisors could be more cognizant about validating the strengths and professional experiences students bring with them into their program and use these strengths and experiences to scaffold both knowledge and confidence.

**Researchers.** In addressing the implications for future research, focus could be on the efficacy of professional identity development and/or overall satisfaction with learning between a hybrid format versus a traditional land based program. Recognizing that the diversity of experience that participants of this study brought with them as they entered their doctoral training and how that impacted their identity development, future research could focus on the impact various social and cultural identities have on the professional identity development process. Further exploration of these areas could produce valuable information to hybrid counselor education programs and contribute to the professional identity development literature in general.

**Students.** This study helps to increase the awareness of the professional identity development experience within the context of a hybrid learning environment. While research indicates that the professional identity development process between a traditional and nontraditional doctoral CE program have some similar aspects, there is an emphasis on making connections with others within a hybrid environment. This can be valuable information for students as they assess academic options to determine which type of learning environment might best meet their personal and professional goals.

### **Conclusions**

This grounded theory study provides a qualitative view into the experience of doctoral students as they develop their professional identities as counselor educators within the context of a hybrid learning environment. This study highlighted the importance of making connections with others, learning how to become a CE, through experiential learning and receiving feedback. It also showed that the participants past experience and personal characteristics were important antecedents that impacted the participants experience as their identity developed.

Additionally, this study has significant relevance to the counseling profession overall. While the population of doctoral students in a hybrid counselor education program may be small, it is also a growing population. Hybrid doctoral counselor education programs provide more opportunity for interested, experienced, and skilled counselors to access training to become educators without having to uproot their lives. This potentially provides the profession with a greater pool of qualified CEs to teach CITs. With that stated, examining the professional identity development of CEs within the context of a hybrid learning environment, was an important undertaking as it is likely

these doctoral students will be some of the individuals teaching, supervising, and assuming responsibility for the identity development of future masters level counselors.

While study findings were in line with previous studies on doctoral student CE identity development, the hybrid learning context directly nuanced the experiences of this study's participants. The findings of this study will contribute to the limited, but growing literature base for professional identity development for the counseling profession, and more specifically for counselor educators.

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## Chapter 4

## **CHAPTER 4: General Conclusions**

This dissertation consists of two scholarly manuscripts, Chapter 2 and Chapter 3, which are thematically linked. Both manuscripts explore, in some way, professional identity and professional identity development related to the counseling profession. The first manuscript is a systematic literature review of the qualitative research on counselor professional identity and professional identity development. The second manuscript is a grounded theory study exploring the experiences of doctoral students as they develop their professional identity as counselor educators (CEs) in a nontraditional learning format.

Though a plethora of theoretical articles and opinion pieces have been written, minimal actual research has been conducted examining the concept of professional identity and professional identity development related to the counseling profession. Much of the literature debates the importance of a collective identity being established for the counseling community in general, and the development of professional identity in masters level counselors-in-training (CITs). The actual research that has been conducted on counselor professional identity has been primarily done using various qualitative methodologies. Based on this, Chapter 2, represents a literature review of the qualitative studies conducted on counselor professional identity and professional identity development. This manuscript is a metasynthesis of the qualitative literature and had three specific purposes. The first purpose was to provide a characterization of the qualitative literature. This characterization provided an overall picture of the qualitative research and identified what has been studied and what remains to be investigated. The second objective was to evaluate the studies to determine if they were of good quality and

credible. And the third purpose was to gain an understanding of what the literature in total revealed about counselor professional identity development through the identification of themes across the qualitative studies reviewed.

This literature review is important because it is the only metasynthesis to address qualitative methodology regarding counselor professional identity and identity development. The research reviewed was comprised of twelve studies conducted between the time periods of 1997 through 2013 (Auxier, Hughes, & Kline, 2003; Brott & Myers, 1999; Dollarhide, Gibson, & Moss, 2013; Gibson, Dollarhide, & Moss, 2010; Henderson, Cook, Libby, & Zambrano, 2006; Limberg, Bell, Super, Jacobson, Fox, DePue, Christmas, Young, & Lambie, 2013; Luke & Goodrich, 2012; Mellin, Hunt, & Nichols, 2011; Nelson & Jackson, 2003; Perry, 2012; Woodside, Oberman, Cole, & Carruth, 2007; Swickert, 1997). The characterization of the research revealed that the most frequently studied population had been with CITs with just a couple of studies focused on doctoral students. No research had been conducted with counselor educators. Similarly, little if any attention had been given to multicultural considerations regarding professional identity or its development, or the various methods of instructional delivery, i.e. online or hybrid/blended learning formats. Through the evaluation of the twelve studies, it was determined that the primary methodology used was grounded theory and phenomenology and half of the studies adhered to consistent epistemological assumptions and demonstrated coherence throughout the study. Through the systematic review, eight themes emerged across all twelve studies; Personality/Past Experience, Questions/Self-Reflection, Learning, External Influences, Growth, Process Related, Community, and Defining Counseling.

The outcome of this review identified several gaps in the literature and set the stage for future research. One population that emerged as being understudied was doctoral students as they develop their professional identity as counselor educators. Only two studies had been conducted to date (Dollarhide et al., 2013; Limberg et al., 2013). Given the importance the counseling profession has placed on establishing a collective identity and fostering identity development in CITs, it was important to examine the identity development of doctoral students who will likely be teaching, supervising, and be responsible for the identity development of future counselors. Another area that was not represented in the literature was the impact a nontraditional learning environment, such as an online or hybrid/blended format, might have on the professional identity process. This too is an important area of inquiry since distance education is becoming increasingly more prevalent in institutions of higher learning (Allen & Seaman, 2014). Based on these identified gaps in the literature, a qualitative study was conducted posing the grand research question of, “How do doctoral students in nontraditional counselor education programs experience their identity development as counselor educators?”

This research question was addressed in the second manuscript, Chapter 3. The study was conducted utilizing a grounded theory methodology exploring the experience of doctoral students as their professional identity evolved from practitioner to educator. The context of this research was a nontraditional educational environment, specifically a hybrid format. A hybrid format was defined as instruction that is delivered primarily online, with the number of face-to-face classes/interactions significantly reduced (Allen & Seaman, 2014). This research was conducted with nine volunteer participants all of whom were either matriculated in a hybrid doctoral counselor education program or who

had graduated within twelve months of participating in the study. Three rounds of semi-structured interviews were conducted, along with a member check that was completed via email.

Following the data analysis for grounded theory as described by Corbin and Strauss (2008), open, axial and selective coding were employed and four categories emerged. These four categories were *beginning hybrid doctoral program*, *learning how to be a CE*, *connecting with others*, and *evolving sense of professional identity*. Of these categories, *beginning hybrid doctoral program*, was of particular importance as it represented the context in which the participants experienced their identity development. The context, a doctoral hybrid program, was significant because it created a unique set of conditions, in which the participants experienced their identity development as a CE. Inherent in a hybrid learning format, participants have limited face-to-face interaction with faculty and other students, much of the learning is done outside of the program, and participants are responsible for finding both required and supplemental learning opportunities. Another important factor within the identified context was the amount and type of professional experience participants had with teaching and supervision prior to starting their hybrid program. This prior experience had significant bearing on their identity development as CEs. Those entering their hybrid program already having some mastery of teaching at a college/university level and/or who already had experience with clinical supervision, seemed to have less anxiety and greater confidence in these areas as their CE identity evolved.

*Connecting with others* emerged as the central category of this theory. The central category represents the main theme of the research and was the category that all the other

categories are related to in some way. Participants connected with others in a variety of ways throughout their hybrid doctoral program as a means of learning how to be a CE and thereby developing their professional identity. Participants engaged in conceptual and experiential learning, formed a range of different types of relationships with others, compared themselves to others, received feedback, felt supported and cultivated a sense of belonging, all within the context of a hybrid program. Through this process participant's learned how to be a CE, their confidence grew and their professional identity evolved.

The results of this study paralleled other studies conducted with doctoral students in traditional land based counselor education programs in a few ways. Among other things, the previous studies identified the importance of relationships with faculty and peers and experiential learning. While this study also found that these two factors were critical to the experiences of the participants as they developed their professional identity as CEs, the crucial difference was the context of the educational format. In a hybrid program where connections with others are not as readily available, forming relationships or interacting with others took intention, effort and resiliency on part of the participants. The significance of making connections with others becomes magnified in the absence of regular contact with faculty and peers. In regards to experiential learning, in the other studies whose context was a traditional land based program, teaching and supervising masters level students is generally built into the program itself. For the participants of this study, it was their responsibility to locate and secure these required and supplemental opportunities, which often required relying on past connections or making new ones.

## **General Implications**

Considering the outcomes of both manuscripts several implications emerged. While these implications are related to training and future research, they can be organized by the various populations that they directly impact. These populations are counselor educators, supervisors, researchers and students.

### **Counselor Educators and Supervisors**

The results of the literature review, Chapter 2, provide insight for CE and supervisors into the professional identity development experiences focusing primarily on CITs. Information gleaned from the research includes an emphasis on the importance of professional identity development, the idea that identity development starts during training, and identifies key experiences that assist with the identity development process. This is critical information for both CEs and supervisors as they train future counselors and help to foster counselor professional identity.

Similarly, Chapter 3, also provides insight into the experience of professional identity development, however the specific focus is on doctoral students in a hybrid counselor education program as their identity evolves from practitioner to educator. This knowledge provides insight for CEs and supervisors to enhance training programs and interactions within a hybrid environment. Counselor educators and supervisors should be mindful about creating ways in which doctoral students can establish important relationships with others, feel supported, obtain experiential learning and receive feedback to further their identity development process. Further, recognition should also

be given to the breadth and depth of professional experience that doctoral students may have as they begin their CE programs.

### **Researchers**

Given the limited amount of research found on professional identity and professional identity development through the literature review, Chapter 2, there are many areas left to explore. Very little research has been conducted on determining what exactly professional identity is and how it is manifested. Most of the studies differed in their definition as to what counselor professional identity was, so it would be of value to conduct a study that focuses on understanding how counselor professional identity is actually operationalized. Further, given the emphasis on competency with multi or cross cultural issues within in the counseling community, it was surprising that only one study examined this construct. Research should be conducted that addresses the various social and cultural aspects of diversity and their impact on professional identity development process across counseling populations.

Based on the outcomes of the grounded theory study, Chapter 3, several implications for further research surfaced. While this study focused solely on the experiences of doctoral students in hybrid counselor education programs, it would be important to see if there is a difference in identity development efficacy between nontraditional hybrid programs and traditional land based programs. Further, based on the study findings that prior professional experience significantly influenced a participant's professional identity experience, it would be of value to examine more specifically which of these experiences helps and what may hinder identity development. This could have direct bearing on future training programs. Lastly, given the growing

number of hybrid programs throughout academia, and within the counseling profession, it would be of import to better understand the experiences of masters level CITs as they develop their identity as professional counselors within a hybrid learning environment.

### **Students**

Both manuscripts of this dissertation provide a foundation for student understanding of the importance of counselor professional identity development, and for the collective identity of the profession. These manuscripts provide insight into what key experiences students can engage in to further their identity development, and thereby empowering themselves in their academic pursuits of becoming a counselor or CE. Chapter 3 provides specific information of the professional identity experience of doctoral students in a hybrid learning format. This knowledge could be of potential value to students assessing whether a hybrid program is a good fit for their academic goals.

### **Conclusions**

The concept of professional identity and professional identity development for the counseling profession has been an ongoing debate for decades. This ongoing dialogue has emphasized the importance of establishing a collective identity and instilling a professional identity in CITs. The first manuscript, Chapter 2, provides a metasynthesis of the qualitative research to date on counselor professional identity and highlights what has been studied and what remains to be explored. The second manuscript, Chapter 3, focuses on an understudied, but important, population and looks at the identity development of doctoral students in a hybrid counselor education program as their identity evolves from practitioner to educator. This study has great significance in that

hybrid learning environments are growing in number and that these type of educational opportunities provide greater accessibility to counselors wanting to become educators. Given the importance the counseling profession has placed on having a collective identity and the professional identity development of CITs, it is important to understand how doctoral students experience their identity development in a hybrid program, as many of the these future counselor educators will be responsible for the identity development of future counselors.

In general, both manuscripts contribute to the growing body of professional identity literature for the counseling community, isolate areas of future research, and provide insight into enhancing training programs for CITs and doctoral students in hybrid counselor education programs.

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## **Appendices**

## Appendix A

**Table 1: Characteristics of the Qualitative Studies on Professional Identity & Professional Identity Development**

Authors	Title	Constructs	Population	Specialization	Definition	Purpose
Auxier, C. R., Hughes, F. R., & Kline, W. B., (2003)	Identity development in counselor-in-training	PID	Masters CIT	Mixed: Mental health, school, student affairs	No	Theory development: Recycling Identity Formation Process. Theory involves conceptual and experiential learning to identity, clarify and reclarify counselors-in-training identities as counselors.
Brott, P. E., & Myers, J. E., (1999)	Development of professional school counselor identity: A grounded theory	PID	Post Masters	School	Yes, page 1	Theory development: Blending of Influences. Four phases identified; structuring, interacting, distinguishing and evolving.
Dollarhide, C. T., Gibson, M. D., & Moss, J. M., (2012)	Professional identity development of counselor education doctoral students	PID	Doctoral	Mixed: School, community, MFT, rehab, pastoral	Yes, page 1	Theory development: Transformational Tasks. Tasks include the integration of multiple identities, evolving legitimacy, acceptance of responsibility; simultaneously progressing from focus on experts to self-validation.
Gibson, M. D., Dollarhide, C. T., & Moss, J. M., (2010)	Professional identity development: A grounded theory of transformational tasks of new counselors	PID	Masters CIT	Mixed: School, MFT	Yes, page 1	Theory development: Transformational Tasks. Tasks include finding a personal definition of counseling, internalizing responsibility for professional growth, and developing a systemic identity; simultaneously progressing from focus on experts to self-validation.
Hendersson, P., Cook,	Today I feel like a	PID	Post Masters	School	Yes, page 2	Experiences, contributing factors and themes identification: 4

K., Libby, M., & Zambra no, E., (2006)	profession al school counselo r					factors were found to be essential to having a strong professional identity: being highly committed; fulfilling appropriate roles; increasing competence; and associating other counselors.
Limber g, D., Bell, H., Super, J. T., Jacobson, L., Fox, J., DePue, M. K., Christm as, C., Young, M. E., Lambie, G. W., (2013)	Professio nal identity develop ment of counselo r educatio n doctoral students: A qualitativ e investiga tion	PID	Doctoral	Not clearly specified	Yes, page 40	Experiences that enhance doctoral students' transition from counseling practitioners to faculty members in higher education: 8 domains identified, teaching, supervision of students, conducting research, conferences, cohort membership, program design, mentoring, perceived as counselor educator by faculty.
Luke, M., & Goodrich, K. M., (2012)	Chi sigma iota chapter leadershi p and professio nal identity develop ment in early career counselo rs	PID/CSI Involvement	Post Masters	Not clearly specified	Yes, page 57	Experiences, contributing factors and themes identification: 6 themes were identified; learning experience, personal characteristics and identification and invitation, system, relationships, internal and behavior, and bridging (or not bridging) the gaps.
Mellin, E. A., Hunt, B., & Nichols, L. M., (2011)	Counselo r professio nal identity: Findings and implicati ons for counseli ng and interprof essional collabora tion	PI/NCE	Post Masters	Mixed: Community , mental health, school	No	Experiences, contributing factors and themes identification: 3 themes emerged in defining a professional counselor; counseling tasks and services provided, counselor training and credentials, wellness and developmental focus.

Nelson, K. W., & Jackson, S. A., (2003)	Professional counselor identity development: A qualitative study of Hispanic student interns	PID/Hispanic Interns	Masters CIT	Mixed: Community, school	No	Experiences, contributing factors and themes identification: 7 general themes emerged; knowledge, personal growth, experience, relationships, accomplishment, costs, and perceptions of counseling profession.
Perry, C. W., (2012)	Constructing professional identity in an online graduate clinical training program: Possibilities for online supervision	PID/Distance Ed	Masters CIT	MFT	Yes, page 6	Experiences, contributing factors and themes identification: 5 student themes emerged; student background, clinical exposure, mentoring by the site supervisor, learning clinical training class, and the importance of clinical skills.
Swickert, M. L., (1997)	Perceptions regarding the professional identity of counselor education doctoral graduates in private practice: A qualitative study	PI/Private Practice	Post-Doctoral	Not clearly specified	No	Experiences, contributing factors and themes identification: 7 themes emerged from doctoral level practitioners; the uniqueness of counselors, career development issues, dislike of research, grouping for support, dislike of managed care, anger over turf wars with professional psychologist, and affinity with holistic and preventive medicine.
Woodside, M., Oberman, A. H., Cole, K. G., & Carruth,	Learning to be a counselor: A prepracticum point of view	PID	Masters CIT	Not clearly specified	No	Experiences, contributing factors and themes identification: 7 general themes emerged: the journey, decision making, self-doubt, counseling is, learning,

E. K., (2007)						boundaries, and differences.
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*Note:* PI=professional identity; PID=professional identity development; CIT=counselors-in-training;  
MFT=marriage and family therapy

## Appendix B

**Table 2: Critique of Qualitative Studies on Professional Identity and Professional Identity Development**

Authors	Title	Method	Coherence*	Research Focus**	Setting**	Researcher Role**	Findings Presentation**
Auxier, C. R., Hughes, F. R., & Kline, W. B., (2003)	Identity development in counselor-in-training	Grounded Theory	Purpose/approach: To develop a provisional theory of counselor identity development grounded in the experiences of the students. Pg 26 Methods: 2 rounds of individual interviews; 1 focus group Analysis: Open, axial, selective coding; analysis simultaneous with data collection. Results: Diagram and direct quotes used; theory proposed, Recycling identity formation process	High acquaintance: 2 rounds of individual face-to-face interviews, no length of time specified; follow up 1 hour focus group conducted. Observations conducted during group supervision.	Setting location not specified for interviews. Observations conducted in "natural" setting.	Explicit written reflection of biases and assumptions given. Discussion about how assumptions could interfere with analysis.	33 quotes provided: 30 brief; 3 extended.
Brott, P. E., & Myers, J. E., (1999)	Development of professional school counselor identity: A grounded theory	Grounded Theory	Purpose/approach: Not clearly specified. Methods: purposive sampling; 1 round of interviews; observations. Analysis: Open, axial, selective coding; memoing. Results: Figure provided; theory proposed, Blending of influences.	High acquaintance. 1 hour interviews conducted; 2 to 3 observations occurred totaling 2 hours for each participant.	Research conducted in "natural" setting; both interviews and observations	Acknowledgment of biases and assumptions, but no written reflection provided. Discussed biases of researcher can affect "generalizability" of findings.	No quotes provided.
Dollarhide, C. T., Gibson, M. D., & Moss, J. M., (2012)	Professional identity development of counselor education doctoral students	Grounded Theory	Purpose/approach: To describe the professional identity transitions for doctoral students in counselor education and to describe the associated transformational tasks. Methods: Focus group. Analysis: Line by line coding; consensus to axial coding; consensus to diagraming. Results: Figure provided, quotes given, theory proposed of transformational tasks for counselor education doctoral student.	Medium acquaintance. Focus groups conducted with 3-6 participants (a total of 7 discrete groups). Additionally, 5 participants were accommodated and either interviewed individually by phone or face-to face.	Setting location not clearly specified for focus group.	Explicit written reflection of biases and assumptions given.	21 quotes provided: 15 brief; 6 extended.
Gibson, M. D., Dollarhide, C. T., & Moss, J. M., (2010)	Professional identity development: A grounded theory of transformational tasks of new counselors	Grounded Theory	Purpose/approach: To provide theory of PID from entry into program through completion of internship as described by trainees. Methods: Focus group. Analysis: Open, axial, selective coding. Results: Figure provided, quotes given; theory proposed of transformational tasks of new counselors.	Medium acquaintance. Focus groups conducted with 4 to 8 participants (a total of 7 discrete groups).	Setting location not clearly specified for focus group.	Explicit written reflection of biases and assumptions given. Explicitly discussed biases and desire to minimize pg 27.	23 quotes provided: 19 brief; 4 extended.
Limberg, D., Bell, H.,	Professional identity development of	Consensual Qualitative research	Purpose/approach: To gain a better understanding of PID process for CEDS during cohort model and to	Medium acquaintance. Three focus groups	Setting location not clearly specified for	Explicit written reflection of biases and	15 quotes provided: 11 brief; 4 extended.

Super, J. T., Jacobson, L., Fox, J., DePue, M. K., Christmas, C., Young, M. E., Lambie, G. W., (2013)	counselor education doctoral students: A qualitative investigation		identify experiences that assist with PID. Methods: Focus group. Analysis: Clustering data and identifying domains, summarizing core ideas, developing categories of themes across cases. Results: eight domains identified; quotes used.	conducted representing 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2 <sup>nd</sup> , and 3 <sup>rd</sup> year cohort membership. Each focus group lasted 1 to 2 hours.	focus group, but implied in classroom setting.	assumptions given, pg 42.	
Luke, M., & Goodrich, K. M., (2012)	Chi sigma iota chapter leadership and professional identity development in early career counselors	Grounded Theory	Purpose/approach: Temporal development of professional identity of early career counselors. Pg 58 Methods: purposive and snowball sampling. Interviews with follow up phone call or email for member checking. Analysis: open, axial, selective coding; data collection and analysis simultaneous. Results: Quotes used; a theoretical model was proposed following Strauss & Corbin's 6 component framework (core category, causal, contextual and intervening conditions, action strategies).	Low acquaintance. Telephone interviews conducted, implied one round conducted, lasting 45 to 90 minutes.	Not possible to utilize "natural setting" in research.	Explicit written reflection of biases and assumptions given. Bracketed assumptions, discussed how these could influence research. No mention of trying to minimize or eliminate effects of bias or assumptions.	72 quotes provided: 59 brief; 13 extended. Identifiers used.
Nelson, K. W., & Jackson, S. A. (2003)	Professional counselor identity development: A qualitative study of Hispanic student interns	Phenomenological	Purpose/approach: Identified seeking to identify factors, not experiences or the essence of an experience. Pg. 4 Methods: Used 8 specific questions that were not as broad as aligned with a stated method. Pg.5 Analysis: Cited using GT for analysis, coding and constant comparison. Results: Results reported in the form of themes/factors. Quotes used.	No acquaintance. Research assistants conducted interview and interacted with participants and transcribed interviews. Researchers analyzed and coded transcript data.	Setting location not specified for interviews.	No mention of biases or assumptions. No mention of the desire to minimize or eliminate biases or assumptions.	17 quotes provided: no extended quotes.
Perry, C. W., (2012)	Constructing professional identity in an online graduate clinical training program: Possibilities for online supervision	Phenomenological	Purpose/approach: To discover if participants experience internet-based clinical training as effective. Methods: Not clearly specified. Interview questions not given, no details of interview provided. Analysis: Minimum details provided for analysis process. The term "saturation" was used as well as "thick reading". Results: 5 themes identified, few quotes provided.	Low acquaintance. 2 rounds of phone interviews, with the second serving as a member check.	Not possible to utilize "natural setting" in research.	No discussion of specific biases or assumptions. No mention of the desire to minimize or eliminate biases or assumptions.	6 quotes provided: no extended quotes. Identifiers used.
Woods, M., Oberman, A. H.,	Learning to be a counselor: A prepracticu	Phenomenological	Purpose/approach: To understand the experience of learning to be a counselor.	Medium acquaintance. 1 round of face-to-face	Setting location not specified for interviews.	Acknowledgment of biases and assumptions, but no written	35 quotes provided: no extended quotes.

Cole, K. G., & Carruth, E. K. (2007)	m point of view		Methods: One broad open ended questions used. Pg.17 Analysis: Identified meaning units, clustered meaning units to identify themes. Used research team, research interpretive group, and member checking. Results: 7 themes emerged based on participant's experiences. Quotes provided.	interviews conducted.		reflection provided (A pre-data collection interview was conducted with the faculty researcher to identify pre-understandings that might affect analysis). No mention of the desire to minimize or eliminate biases or assumptions.	
Swickert, M. L., (1997)	Perceptions regarding the professional identity of counselor education doctoral graduates in private practice: A qualitative study	Case Study	Purpose/approach: To investigate how doctoral graduates of counselor education programs in private practice viewed their professional identity. Methods: Interviews, collection of artifacts, observations and demographic forms. Analysis: 10 individual case studies written and analyzed for connections. Peer debriefing conducted. Results: Quotes provided; 6 themes emerged.	Medium acquaintance. In person/phone interviews conducted for about 1.5 hours. Collection of brochures and business cards from each participant done.	Research conducted in "natural" setting: both face-to-face and phone interviews.	Acknowledgment of biases and assumptions, but no written reflection provided (autobiography written to clarify view of topic and to identify the lens researched would be viewed through). No mention of the desire to minimize or eliminate biases or assumptions.	27 quotes provided: 25 brief; 2 extended. Identifiers used.
Henders on, P., Cook, K., Libby, M., & Zambra no, E., (2006)	Today I feel like a professional school counselor	Self-study	Purpose/approach: Not clearly specified. Methods: 8 group dialogues, autobiographies written by all participants. Analysis: Grounded theory coding and comparative analysis used to identify emerging themes.. Results: 4 themes emerged from data.	High acquaintance. Researcher/part icipants met 8 times for group dialogues.	Setting location not specified for group dialogues.	No mention of biases or assumptions. No mention of the desire to minimize or eliminate biases or assumptions.	16 quotes provided: no extended quotes.
Mellin, E. A., Hunt, B., & Nichols , L. M., (2011)	Counselor professional identity: Findings and implications for counseling and interprofessional collaboration	Survey	Purpose/approach: To determine how professional counselors define the profession, and how they distinguish it from other helping professions. Methods: Survey sent to 750 counselors who passed the NCE within the past 10 years. Example question provided, but details about how many questions were multiple choice, fill in the blank or open-ended. Analysis: 238 completed and returned the survey. Analysis of the questions was done using constant comparative method and coding. Results: 3 major themes emerged, participant quote used to illustrate themes.	No acquaintance. Survey mailed to participants.	Not possible to utilize "natural setting" in research.	No mention of biases or assumptions. No mention of the desire to minimize or eliminate biases or assumptions.	20 quotes provided: no extended quotes.

Note: Criteria for Critiquing: \*Kline, 2008; \*\*Hoyt & Bhati, 2007

## Appendix C

**Table 3: Initial Coding and Descriptive Themes of Qualitative Studies on Counselor PI and PID**

Authors	Coding of Study Findings	Descriptive Themes
Auxier, C. R., Hughes, F. R., & Kline, W. B., (2003)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Learning; conceptual and experiential</li> <li>-Developing new skills, behaviors, attitudes; as a counselor</li> <li>-Struggling with transition between conceptual and experiential learning</li> <li>-Feeling a range of emotion; excitement, anxiousness, self-doubt</li> <li>-Receiving external evaluative feedback</li> <li>-Questioning self; choices, feedback, skills</li> <li>-Processing external evaluative feedback to accept or reject</li> <li>-Gaining confidence</li> <li>-Continuing process; returning to conceptual and experiential learning</li> <li>-Peeling away the layers</li> <li>-Appreciating the experience and understanding the process</li> </ul>	<p><b>Learning:</b> Learning begins conceptually in the classroom and consists of CITs learning new knowledge, theory and skills. Movement toward experiential learning affords CIT the opportunity to apply new knowledge in a practicum or internship setting.</p> <p><b>Evaluation:</b> External evaluation is given by “experts” that cause emotional reactions, and self-reflection, and questioning. Through this process CIT’s acquire confidence and in turn move closer to internal evaluation.</p> <p><b>Experiencing a Range of Emotions:</b> As CITs move through conceptual learning to experiential learning they experience excitement and anxiousness. There is a struggle with moving from acquiring knowledge to applying knowledge that causes uncertainty about fit with profession. As CITs receive external feedback, again begin to experience varying emotions, and question self and feedback.</p> <p><b>Self-Reflection/Questioning:</b> CITs reflect on who they are and if counseling is the right fit. CIT’s question external evaluation and question their choices and skills; determine to accept or reject feedback. Experience personal growth.</p> <p><b>Ongoing Process:</b> There is a cycling back to conceptual learning from experiential learning, which also triggers external evaluation, questions, range of emotions. Knowledge is learned that that process of developing as a counselor is ongoing</p>
Brott, P. E., & Myers, J. E., (1999)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Facing and blending multiple influences</li> <li>-Needing personal guidelines for professional role</li> <li>-Being influenced by experiences, other counselors, and setting</li> <li>-Interacting with others in role of counselor</li> <li>-Viewing experience by years of experiences and knowledge of legacy</li> <li>-Understanding the needs of particular setting</li> <li>-Structuring perspective based on graduate training and needs of program</li> <li>-Distinguishing goals and perspectives</li> <li>-Evolving in role</li> </ul>	<p>As school counselors self-conceptualize their role, they are influenced by multiple factors interacting with these influences serve to develop personal guidelines needed for this self-conceptualization.</p> <p><b>Experience:</b> determined by years of service and previous knowledge.</p> <p><b>Environment:</b> entails both the setting, the student population, and whether there is another service provider; support available.</p> <p><b>Structuring:</b> is an influence that is based on external factors, such as previous training and needs of environment.</p> <p><b>Interacting:</b> is internal influence that involves assessing and managing situations; making decisions in role.</p> <p><b>Distinguishing:</b> identified by the counselor and based on the influences, what needs to be done and how it is to be done.</p> <p><b>Evolving:</b> represent the dynamic and fluid nature of the process; conditions changes, which in turn impact the influences. Ongoing process.</p>
Dollarhide, C. T., Gibson, M. D., & Moss, J. M., (2013)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Facing new challenges</li> <li>-Evolving identity; from counselor to educator</li> <li>-Integrating new and old identities</li> <li>-Feeling dissonance between the two identities</li> <li>-Changing confidence</li> <li>-Experiencing anxiety</li> <li>-Growing confidence</li> <li>-Looking to others for normalization</li> <li>-Personalizing information and experiences</li> <li>-Learning by teaching</li> <li>-Wanting to have teaching based on personal experiences</li> <li>-Presenting at conferences important</li> <li>-Conducting research important</li> <li>-Belonging to professional organizations important</li> <li>Seeking validation from others</li> <li>-Thinking critically about performance</li> <li>-Reflecting on what is being learned</li> </ul>	<p><b>Integration of Identities:</b> doctoral students have an established counselor identity and begin to integrate that with the new identity of doctoral student, and then counselor educator.</p> <p><b>Growing Confidence:</b> doctoral student’s confidence begins to waver as they enter a doctoral program and learn to be counselor educators. They experience dissonance between their success as counselors and the challenges in learning to be counselor educators. Through experience their confidence begins to grow again.</p> <p><b>Commitment:</b> is expressed through wanting to gain experience in teaching, presenting, and supervising. Also in wanting to teach from the experience one has gained.</p> <p><b>Learning:</b> Experiential learning is key to developing as counselor educator, specifically related to teaching, supervising and research.</p> <p><b>Relationships:</b> looking to others for modeling, normalizing, validating, and evaluating is very important.</p>

<p>Gibson, M. D., Dollarhide, C. T., &amp; Moss, J. M., (2010)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Defining counseling</li> <li>-Taking responsibility for professional growth</li> <li>-Transforming to a systemic identity</li> <li>-Relying on expert teaching and external validation to internalized responsibility and self-validation</li> <li>-Evolving definition of counseling with experience</li> <li>-Believing the public is uninformed or holds negative view of counseling</li> <li>-Expressing commitment to counseling despite of public view</li> <li>-Emerging identity based on training</li> <li>-Assuming more responsibility for learning in more experienced CITs</li> <li>-Being a member of professional organization</li> <li>-Becoming a life-long learner</li> <li>-Moving toward internal locus of evaluation and self-validation</li> <li>-Ongoing process</li> </ul>	<p><b>Stages of Training:</b> CITs experience a need for external validation at the beginning of training as CITs move through training program there is a shift toward internal validation.</p> <p><b>External Influences:</b> Early stage CITs need for external validation can be observed by the mirroring of definition of counseling, the focus of individual skills and learning from experts. Validation is needed from peers, faculty, supervisors, and other counselors.</p> <p><b>Internal Process:</b> More advanced CITs experience a movement toward internal validation. This is observed through a more personalized definition of counseling, taking more responsibility for professional growth, being part of a professional community and integration of personal and professional selves.</p> <p><b>Commitment:</b> Recognition that becoming a counselor is an ongoing process and requires being a life-long learner.</p>
<p>Henderson, P., Cook, K., Libby, M., &amp; Zambrano, E., (2006)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Identifying dimensions of school counselor identity: 1) commitment; 2)role; 3)competence; 4) community</li> <li>-Sensing a “calling” to school counseling</li> <li>-Yearning to be the best</li> <li>-Striving to gain self-knowledge and awareness</li> <li>-Reflecting on own personal and professional commitment</li> <li>-Moving past perceiving situations from a teacher’s frame of reference</li> <li>-Tolerating ambiguities inherent in counseling</li> <li>-Valuing consultation with peers</li> <li>-Recognizing that there is not a final destination</li> <li>Feeling that personal characteristics helped with a good fit</li> <li>-Integrating learning from experience, role models and training</li> <li>-Understanding role through relationships with members of profession/community</li> <li>-Feeling competent began with feedback from others</li> <li>-Understanding more knowledge and skills were needed</li> <li>-Continuing to seek more knowledge and skills, and receive ongoing supervision</li> <li>-Belonging to a professional community</li> <li>-Desiring to give back to professional community</li> </ul>	<p>Professional identity for school counselors examined using a life span framework. Four themes identified.</p> <p><b>Commitment:</b> In the early stages of career, a sense of counseling being a “calling” occurs and a yearning to be the best and to gain self-knowledge and awareness. Through experience valuing consultation with peers and an understanding that there is not a final destination, but an ongoing journey.</p> <p><b>Role:</b> Role begins to take shape through training and the acquisition of knowledge and skills. Reflection on personal characteristics and a “fit” for the profession is examined. Defining role through relationships with other counselors and professional community.</p> <p><b>Competence:</b> Feeling competent begins with external feedback from others. It involves understanding when more knowledge is needed, continuously seeking learning opportunities through training and supervision and being invited to train others.</p> <p><b>Community:</b> Actively participating in a professional community and then desiring to give back in some way.</p>
<p>Limberg, D., Bell, H., Super, J. T., Jacobson, L., Fox, J., DePue, M. K., Christmas, C., Young, M. E., Lambie, G. W., (2013)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Gaining teaching experience important</li> <li>-First hand experiences important to learning</li> <li>-Running psycho-educational groups important to learning</li> <li>-Supervising Master level students important to learning and identity development</li> <li>-Interacting with Master level students important to developing identity as counselor educator</li> <li>-Conducting research important to learning and identity development</li> <li>-Attending conferences important developing identity and networking with peers and other counselor educators</li> <li>-Belonging to a cohort important for normalizing, support, and as future colleagues</li> <li>-Mentoring from faculty important</li> <li>Being seen as a counselor educator important</li> </ul>	<p><b>Learning:</b> primary focus is placed on experiential learning and gaining experience with teaching, supervising, and research. Experiential learning impacted the identity development of counselor educator.</p> <p><b>Supervising:</b> supervision of students was considered to enhance identity development. Supervision also helped doctoral student learn how to develop future counselors.</p> <p><b>Teaching:</b> combining supervision and teaching and running psycho-educational groups was important learning. Learning to grade and explain grades to students was equally important.</p> <p><b>Relationships:</b> with students being taught and supervised validated evolving identity. Relationships with cohort members and peers important to growing identity. Relationship with faculty, supervisors, mentors, and other counselor educators very important to identity development.</p>
<p>Luke, M., &amp; Goodrich, K. M., (2012)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Learning is an authentic way</li> <li>-Learning outside the classroom/curriculum how to be a counselor</li> <li>-Applying classroom content in the real-world</li> <li>-Learning to be an advocate and leader</li> <li>-Having personal characteristics to help with leadership role</li> <li>-Using previous leadership experience to draw from</li> <li>-Using personal beliefs and values as guiding principles for counseling &amp; leadership</li> <li>-feeling frustrated with lack of involvement and support</li> </ul>	<p>The impact of participating with CSI in a leadership capacity on professional identity development. Six themes identified.</p> <p><b>Learning Experience:</b> CSI provided a learning experience outside of the classroom. An authentic learning experience about how to be a counselor, advocate and leader.</p> <p><b>Influence of Personal Characteristics:</b> Personal characteristics and previous experience with involvement and leadership helped in CSI leadership role. Existing beliefs and values helped in leadership role and in becoming a counselor. Already having self-awareness was a contributing factor for positive experience.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Having a role model and mentor help with learning how to be a counselor &amp; leader</li> <li>-Being mentored, critical to developing as a counselor and leader</li> <li>-Building relationships with alumni, faculty, students, professionals</li> <li>-Receiving mixed messages from faculty and advisors</li> <li>-Assessing a situation and developing a plan or strategy</li> <li>-Learning to be creative and think outside the box</li> <li>-Learning to deal with conflict, set boundaries and assess strengths and weaknesses</li> <li>-Bridging the gaps in perceived incongruences</li> <li>Getting involved in professional activities</li> </ul>	<p><b>Part of System:</b> Gaining experience with a system, or community was valuable. At times frustration occurred with a perceived lack of involvement or support.</p> <p><b>Relationships:</b> Experience provided role models and mentorship, which helped develop leadership and counseling skills. Built relationships with alumni, faculty, peers, and other professionals in the community.</p> <p><b>Internal &amp; Behavioral:</b> Developed interpersonal skills such as conflict management, goal setting, strategizing, creative thinking, setting boundaries, and assessing strengths and weaknesses.</p> <p><b>Gaps:</b> Understanding gaps in perceptions of self and others, responsibilities.</p>
Mellin, E. A., Hunt, B., & Nichols, L. M., (2011)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Defining professional counselors by the tasks and services provided (78%), training and credentials (49%), and a wellness and development focus (12%)</li> <li>-Describing counselors not be specialization, but in general terms (97%)</li> <li>-Distinguishing counseling from social work (SW) in that SW is focused on case management and community resources (35%)</li> <li>-Counseling is primarily focused on personal growth and wellness (31%)</li> <li>-Testing and assessment is a primary function of psychology (23%)</li> <li>-Counseling is focused on individuals vs social works focus on social and public sector aspects (10%)</li> <li>-No discernible distinction between professions (9%)</li> </ul>	<p>Defining professional counselors from the perspective of those who passed the NCE and how the profession differs from other helping professions.</p> <p><b>Tasks &amp; Services Provided:</b> The focus is on providing a variety of counseling services to clients to help facilitate change. Counselors work with individuals, groups, families, and couples. This is opposed to social work which is considered more case management oriented, administrative and more systemic and psychology which is considered more assessment and testing oriented.</p> <p><b>Training &amp; Credentials:</b> Masters level training in an accredited program and earning a NCC and/or state licensure. Maintaining involvement in professional organizations, and continuing education.</p> <p><b>Wellness and Development:</b> The focus is on wellness, preventative and holistic measures, including personal growth and empowerment. This is in contrast to the predominant medical model used by psychologists.</p>
Nelson, K. W., & Jackson, S. A., (2003)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Emerging themes (7); knowledge, personal growth, experiential learning, relationships, accomplishments, costs, perceptions of counseling profession</li> <li>-Gaining knowledge</li> <li>-Considering what fit personality and values</li> <li>-Realizing the learning process is life long</li> <li>-Feeling frustrated that classroom knowledge can't be applied in black /white way</li> <li>-Evolving process of developing professional identity</li> <li>-Ongoing personal reflection</li> <li>-Experiencing personal growth important and primary factor for Hispanic students</li> <li>-Participating in experiential learning important and increased confidence</li> <li>-Feeling uncertainty and anxiety starting experiential learning</li> <li>-Identifying relationships with faculty, peers, supervisors, and family as being very important</li> <li>-Having access to faculty important</li> <li>-Being treated as a professional important</li> <li>-Having the support of family important</li> <li>-Feeling a sense of accomplishment</li> <li>-Making personal sacrifices such as financial, time and other resources</li> <li>-Viewing the general public as uninformed about counseling and not holding it in high regard compared to other helping professions</li> <li>-Explaining counseling to family and others</li> </ul>	<p>Professional identity development examined with Hispanic intern students.</p> <p><b>Knowledge:</b> gaining knowledge was important and believing that personal characteristics and values made a good fit with professions. Realization that professional identity is an ongoing process and one needs to become a life-long learner. There is also feelings of frustration associated with applying conceptual knowledge learned in classroom to experiential learning such as in internship.</p> <p><b>Personal Growth:</b> Experiencing personal growth and insight about self was very important to the process.</p> <p><b>Experiential Learning:</b> Feelings of uncertainty about starting the experiential learning process. Feelings of anxiety to excitement experienced. By participating in experiential learning confident increase.</p> <p><b>Relationships:</b> Relationships with faculty, peers, supervisors, and family extremely important. Having access to faculty, "an open door" policy was important to Hispanic interns development. Relationship with peers seen as emotional support and positively affected learning. Support from family extremely important.</p> <p><b>Accomplishments:</b> Interns had a sense of accomplishment with earning a Masters degree and believed that their options for work increased.</p> <p><b>Costs:</b> Belief that significant sacrifices were made, specifically when related to finances.</p> <p><b>Perceptions of Counseling Profession:</b> Belief that the general public was misinformed about what counseling is and had a higher regard for other helping professions. Despite this belief, interns had a positive view of the field.</p>
Perry, C. W., (2012)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Emerging themes (5); student background, clinical exposure, mentoring by site supervisor, learning in the clinical training class, importance of clinical skills</li> <li>-Identifying past experiences as important in professional development</li> <li>-Learning in a practical setting and applying classroom knowledge</li> <li>-Mentoring by site supervisor significant for growth</li> <li>-Developing relationships with peers</li> </ul>	<p><b>Student Background:</b> Students identified previous experiences as being a benefit to their professional development.</p> <p><b>Clinical Exposure:</b> Important to the growth and development of the student was the experiential learning through meeting with clients and practicing skills and applying knowledge learned in the classroom.</p> <p><b>Mentoring by Supervisor:</b> Being mentored and observing a professional helpful to counselor development.</p>

	-Learning from classroom interactions	<b>Learning in Clinical Training Class:</b> Interacting with peers was helpful to learning and development.
Swickert, M. L., (1997)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Emerging themes (7); uniqueness of counselors, career development issues, dislike for research, grouping for support, dislike of managed care</li> <li>-Being unique as counselors</li> <li>-Helping others and making a difference</li> <li>-Specializing encouraged</li> <li>-Struggling to form a collective identity</li> <li>-Lobbying to solidify a recognized identity</li> <li>-Feeling the counseling is a satisfying and rewarding choice of career</li> <li>-Appreciating the focus on people not the bottom line</li> <li>-Disliking research</li> <li>-Valuing the support of other professionals</li> <li>-Having difficult and invalidating experiences with managed care</li> <li>-Feeling frustrated with psychologist whose services seemed to be more valued</li> <li>-Practicing a preventative and holistic approach</li> </ul>	<p><b>Uniqueness of Counselors:</b> Described as helping others and making a difference. A very practice oriented profession and specialization was encouraged.</p> <p><b>Career Development Issues:</b> Believed counseling was a satisfying and rewarding career, but had its frustrations too. Appreciated the focus on people, not the bottom line.</p> <p><b>Dislike for Research:</b> Did not participate in generating research, and reference to it not being valuable. Emphasis placed on professional associations and training.</p> <p><b>Grouping for Support:</b> Evidence of maintain professional connections through networking or consultation, this was done mostly for peer support.</p> <p><b>Dislike of Managed Care:</b> frustration at not being recognized as valid providers of mental health services. Most participants chose to not utilize the managed care system.</p> <p><b>Turf Wars:</b> Frustration with psychologist and viewed psychology as being in the “power position” by being viewed as the dominant provider of mental health services.</p> <p><b>Holistic Approach:</b> Belief that counseling assumed a more holistic and preventative approach as opposed to psychology.</p>
Woodside, M., Oberman, A. H., Cole, K. G., & Carruth, E. K., (2007)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Emerging themes (7); the journey, decision making, self-doubt, counseling is, learning, boundaries, and differences</li> <li>-Describing journey that lead to entering counseling program</li> <li>-Learning to be a counselor is a process, part of the journey</li> <li>-Having personality traits, such as self-awareness, that makes a good fit with counseling</li> <li>-Questioning the decision to become a counselor, the selected path</li> <li>-Feeling certainty about the decision/path to become a counselor</li> <li>Expressing concerns about lack of skills &amp; training</li> <li>-Feeling uncertain, or intimidated about the practicum experience</li> <li>-Relating to peers to normalize the experience</li> <li>-Describing counseling as empowering or helping clients help themselves</li> <li>-Expressing the need to learn and the joy of learning</li> <li>-Gaining knowledge about self</li> <li>-Establishing balance and recognizing limitations</li> <li>-Needing to establishing boundaries with others</li> <li>-Noticing differences between self and others, and within self</li> <li>-Noticing difference between undergraduate work and graduate work</li> </ul>	<p><b>The Journey:</b> The process of becoming a counselor was described as a journey. The journey often began before the CIT entered the training program. CITs believed the personality traits, such as self-awareness, were beneficial to their development.</p> <p><b>Decision Making:</b> At times CITs question whether the decision to pursue counseling as a profession was the right choice; questioning their path. Then there were times they were certain about their decision.</p> <p><b>Self-doubt:</b> CITs expressed concern over lack of skills and training and feeling intimidated about the experiential leaning aspect. Building relationships with peers helped to normalize their experience.</p> <p><b>Counseling is:</b> CITs described counseling as empowering others to help themselves. To help provide tools to help people to solve their problems.</p> <p><b>Learning:</b> Knowledge and skills were acquired in classroom with the understanding there would have to be practice with experiential learning activities. It was also expressed the need to learn and there was joy in learning. There was also learning about self that was occurring simultaneously.</p> <p><b>Boundaries:</b> CITs recognized the need to establish boundaries with others and well as recognizing their own limitations.</p> <p><b>Differences:</b> CITs expressed noticing differences between self and others, and difference within themselves. There was also acknowledgement of differences between undergraduate work and graduate work.</p>

## Appendix D

**Table 4: Analytic Themes from the Thematic Synthesis of Qualitative Studies on Counselor PI and PID**

Author s	Personality / Past Experience	Questioning/ Self-Reflection	Learning	External Influences	Growth	Process Related	Defining Counseling	Communi ty
Auxier, C. R., Hughes, F. R., & Kline, W. B., 2003.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Questioning self; choices, feedback, skills</li> <li>-Processing external evaluative feedback to accept or reject</li> <li>- There is a struggle with moving from acquiring to applying knowledge that causes uncertainty about fit with profession.</li> <li>- CITs reflect on who they are and if counseling is the right fit.</li> <li>-CIT's question external evaluation and question their choices and skills; determine to accept or reject feedback</li> <li>Peeling away the layers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Learning; conceptually and experientially</li> <li>-Struggling with transition between conceptual and experiential learning</li> <li>- Learning begins conceptually in the classroom and consists of CITs learning new knowledge, theory and skills.</li> <li>Movement toward experiential learning affords CIT the opportunity to apply new knowledge in a practicum or internship setting.</li> <li>- Developing new skills, behaviors, attitudes; as a counselor</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Receiving external evaluative feedback is part of development</li> <li>-External evaluation is given by "experts" that cause emotional reactions, and self-reflection, and questioning.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Through external feedback CIT's acquire confidence and in turn move closer to internal evaluation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Continuing process; returning to conceptual and experiential learning</li> <li>- As CITs move through conceptual learning to experiential learning they experience excitement and anxiousness.</li> <li>- There is a cycling back to conceptual learning from experiential learning, which also triggers external evaluation, questions, range of emotions.</li> <li>- Understanding that process of developing as a counselor is ongoing</li> </ul>		
Brott, P. E., & Myers, J. E., 1999.				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Relating to peers to normalize the experience</li> <li>-Needing to establish boundaries with others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- internal influence that involves assessing and managing situations; making</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Evolving in role</li> <li>-Represent the dynamic and fluid nature of the process; conditions</li> </ul>		

				-Being influenced by experiences, other counselors, and setting	decisions in role.	changes, which in turn impact the influences.		
Dollarhide, C. T., Gibson, M. D., & Moss, J. M., 2013.	-Having a strong counselor identity. -counselor identity is integrated with doctoral student identity to early counselor educator identity.	-questioning competency and ability	- Experiential learning very important in the form of teaching, presenting at conferences, conducting research and mentoring others.	-Look for validation, feedback, from experts and peers. -Look to colleagues for modeling.	-Shifting to self-validation . Movement from observing to faculty and deferring to them, to making on choice and developing own way.	-Evolving process transitioning from practitioner to counselor educator.	-Evolving definition of counseling. Early in program reliance on text book and using third person reference. Later in program a more personalized definition evolves.	
Gibson, M. D., Dollarhide, C. T., & Moss, J. M., 2010.			-Becoming a life-long learner -Emerging identity based on training	- Validation is needed from peers, faculty, supervisors, and other counselors. - Relying on expert teaching and external validation for development - Early stage CITs need for external validation can be observed by the mirroring of definition of counseling, the focus of individual skills and learning from experts.	-Taking responsibility for professional growth -Move to internalized responsibility and self-validation - Assuming more responsibility for learning in more experienced CITs -Moving toward internal locus of evaluation and self-validation - More advanced CITs experience a movement toward internal validation . This is observed through a more personalized definition of	-Ongoing process		- Transforming to a systemic identity -Being a member of professional organization

					counseling, taking more responsibility for professional growth, being part of a professional community and integration of personal and professional selves.			
Henderson, P., Cook, K., Libby, M., & Zambra no, E., 2007.	-Sensing a “calling” to school counseling - Feeling that personal characteristics helped with a good fit	-Reflecting on own personal and professional commitment -Striving to gain self-knowledge and awareness	- Integrating learning from experience, role models and training - Understanding more knowledge and skills were needed - Continuing to seek more knowledge and skills, and receive ongoing supervision	-Entails both the setting, the student population, and whether there is another service provider; support available. - Feeling competent began with feedback from others	- Feeling competent began with feedback from others  - Recognizing that there is not a final destination			- Belonging to a professional community -Desiring to give back to professional community
Limberg, D., Bell, H., Super, J. T., Jacobson, L., Fox, J., DePue, M. K., Christmas, C., Young, M. E., Lambie, G. W., 2013.			-learning of teaching theory important - Experiential learning in the form of teaching and supervising critical. - Conceptual learning in the form of 2 classes on supervision important. -Program design intentional	-Interacting with students as a teacher and supervisor influential. -Being evaluated and validated by faculty extremely important - Relationships with cohort members important for learning and validating - Accessibility	- Acknowledgment of transition from practitioner to counselor educator.			-Being part of a cohort gives sense of community. - Presenting at conferences and networking important.

			in developing skills and knowledge incrementally.	y to faculty and being mentored important. -Being perceived as a counselor educator important.				
Luke, M., & Goodrich, K. M., 2012.	-Having personal characteristics to help with leadership role -Using previous leadership experience to draw from -Using personal beliefs and values as guiding principles for counseling & leadership - Already having self-awareness was a contributing factor for positive experience .		-Learning in an authentic way -Learning outside the classroom/ curriculum how to be a counselor -Applying classroom content in the real-world -Learning to be an advocate and leader -Learning to be creative and think outside the box -Learning to deal with conflict, set boundaries and assess strengths and weaknesses - CSI provided a learning experience outside of the classroom	-Valuing consultation with peers - Understanding role through relationships with members of profession/community				-Getting involved in professional activities
Mellin, E. A., Hunt, B., & Nichols, L. M., 2011			-Pursuing continuing education				-The focus is on providing a variety of counseling services to clients to help facilitate change. Counselors work with individuals, groups, families, and couples	- Maintaining involvement in professional organizations - Importance of following defined code of ethics from

							<p>Masters level training in an accredited program and earning a NCC and/or state licensure and focusing on wellness, preventative and holistic measures, including personal growth and empowerment. Counseling is in opposition to social work which is considered more case management oriented, administrative and more systemic and psychology which is considered more assessment and testing oriented.</p> <p>- Counseling development underpinnings in contrast to the predominant medical model used by psychologists.</p>	<p>professional association.</p>
<p>Nelson, K. W., &amp; Jackson, S. A., 2003.</p>	<p>- Considering what fit personality and values</p>	<p>-Ongoing personal reflection</p>	<p>-Gaining knowledge -Realizing the learning process is life long -Feeling frustrated that classroom knowledge</p>	<p>-Identifying relationships with faculty, peers, supervisors, and family as being very important -Having access to</p>	<p>- Experiencing personal growth important and primary factor for Hispanic students</p>	<p>-Evolving process of developing professional identity</p>		

			<p>can't be applied in black /white way</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Participating in experiential learning important and increased confidence</li> <li>-Feeling uncertainty and anxiety starting experiential learning</li> </ul>	<p>faculty important</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Being treated as a professional important</li> <li>-Having the support of family important</li> </ul>				
Perry, C. W., 2012.	- Students identified previous experiences as being a benefit to their professional development.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Important to the growth and development of the student was the experiential learning through meeting with clients and practicing skills and applying knowledge learned in the classroom.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Being mentored and observing a professional helpful to counselor development.</li> <li>-Interacting with peers was helpful to learning and development.</li> </ul>				
Swickert, M. L., 1997.			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Pursued doctorate as continuing education</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Valuing the support of other professionals</li> <li>-Network with other professionals to improve quality of services</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Helping others and making a difference</li> <li>-Practicing a preventative and holistic approach</li> <li>-Compared counseling degree as more flexible, practice focused as compared to psychology, which was described as regimented.</li> <li>-frustration expressed with the perception</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Importance of belonging to professional organizations</li> <li>-Proved workshops to community</li> </ul>

							that psychology and the medical model was more widely accepted.	
Woodsde, M., Oberman, A. H., Cole, K. G., & Carruth, E. K., 2007.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Describing journey that lead to entering counseling program</li> <li>-Having personality traits, such as self-awareness, that makes a good fit with counseling</li> </ul>	-Questioning the decision to become a counselor, the selected path	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Expressing concerns about lack of skills &amp; training</li> <li>-Feeling uncertain, or intimidated about the practicum experience</li> <li>-- Expressing the need to learn and the joy of learning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Relating to peers to normalize the experience</li> <li>-Needing to establishing boundaries with others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Gaining knowledge about self</li> <li>- Establishing balance and recognizing limitations</li> <li>- Feeling certainty about the decision/path to become a counselor</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Learning to be a counselor is a process, part of the journey</li> </ul>		

## Appendix E

### Recruitment Letter of Introduction to Faculty and/or Program Coordinators of Hybrid/Blended Ph.D. Counselor Education Programs



Dear [faculty/program coordinator],

My name is Stacey Carrillo. I am a doctoral candidate in Counselor Education and Supervision at Oregon State University. I am in the process of recruiting participants for a grounded theory study on the professional identity development process of doctoral students in, or recent graduates of, a Counselor Education doctoral program using a hybrid/blended instructional format. This study is being conducted in accordance with the dissertation/thesis qualifications as set forth by Oregon State University. I am under the supervision of Dr. Deborah Rubel, Ph.D., Associate Professor, who serves as my dissertation chair.

Due to your ability to access counselor education doctoral students in a hybrid or blended instructional doctoral program, I would like to ask for your help in the recruitment of participants for my research study. The criteria for participation are as follows:

- Must be over the age of 18;
- Must be enrolled in a doctoral Counselor Education program that uses a hybrid or blended learning format, (programs that utilize both face-to-face and online instruction, with a substantial proportion of the content delivered online and a reduced number of face-to-face classes);
- Must have successfully completed one full academic year, and are in the second or any subsequent year of the doctoral program, or have graduated within the previous 12 months of participating in this study;
- Must have a Masters degree in Counseling, School Counseling, Clinical Mental Health Counseling, College Personnel Counseling, or Community Counseling;
- Must professionally identify as a counselor and not another helping professional, such as social worker, psychologist, or nurse;
- Must have a goal of working at least part time as a counselor educator upon completion of doctoral degree;
- Must have an interest in and ability to explore their professional identity as a counselor and counselor educator.

If you know any individuals who meet the above criteria, I would appreciate it if you would give them the information I have attached. This information includes an invitation to participate/ letter of introduction and a participant verbal consent form, which further explains the research study. Please indicate to the prospective participant that participation is strictly voluntary, and if interested he or she may contact me directly. By contacting me directly, the risk of breach in confidentiality will be minimized and other individuals will have no knowledge of their participation in the research study. My email address is [carrills@onid.orst.edu](mailto:carrills@onid.orst.edu). Participants may also contact the principal investigator, Deborah Rubel, Ph.D. at [deborah.rubel@oregonstate.edu](mailto:deborah.rubel@oregonstate.edu).

The title of the study is “A Grounded Theory Study of How Doctoral Students in a Nontraditional Counselor Education Program Experience the Development of Professional Identity”.

The research design and method for this investigation is a qualitative, grounded theory study. Participating in this research study will involve an initial interview that will take 45 minutes, and two follow-up interviews of similar length. In the interviews, participants will be asked some questions about their personal and academic backgrounds, but mainly about the experiences as they develop their professional identity as a counselor educator. The interviews will be conducted by phone, and in total take approximately three hours of the participant’s time. The study itself will span no more than five months.

I appreciate your help with this research, which will add to the body of literature related to professional identity development of counselor educators.

Thank you in advance for your support and assistance.

Sincerely,

Stacey L. Carrillo, M.S.  
Oregon State University PhD Candidate

## Appendix F

### Email Invitation to Participate in Study



Dear Potential Participant,

My name is Stacey Carrillo. I am a doctoral candidate in Counselor Education and Supervision at Oregon State University. I am conducting a study entitled: "A Grounded Theory Study of How Doctoral Students in a Nontraditional Counselor Education Program Experience the Development of Professional Identity". You may be eligible to participate in this study, if you choose. Participating in this research study is strictly voluntary and, if you qualify, it is up to you to decide if you would like to participate. If you believe that you qualify and desire to be a part of this study, please contact me, the student researcher, directly.

Briefly, to be eligible for this study you:

- Must be over the age of 18;
- Must be enrolled in a doctoral Counselor Education program that uses a hybrid or blended learning format, (programs that utilize both face-to-face and online instruction, with a substantial proportion of the content delivered online and a reduced number of face-to-face classes);
- Must have successfully completed one full academic year, and are in the second or any subsequent year of the doctoral program, or have graduated within the previous 12 months of participating in this study;
- Must have a Masters degree in Counseling, School Counseling, Clinical Mental Health Counseling, College Personnel Counseling, or Community Counseling;
- Must professionally identify as a counselor and not another helping professional, such as social worker, psychologist, or nurse;
- Must have a goal of working at least part time as a counselor educator upon completion of doctoral degree;
- Must have an interest in and ability to explore their professional identity as a counselor and counselor educator.

As stated previously, participation is strictly voluntary. If you are interested you may contact the student researcher, Stacey Carrillo, M.S., directly via email at [carrills@onid.orst.edu](mailto:carrills@onid.orst.edu) or by calling me at my direct phone number, (702)767-0734. Please include phone contact information so that I might contact you to set up an initial screening conversation. During the initial screening, you will also have the opportunity to ask questions about the research. You may also contact the principle investigator, Deborah Rubel, Ph.D. at [deborah.rubel@oregonstate.edu](mailto:deborah.rubel@oregonstate.edu) or by direct phone at (541)737-5973.

Thank you,

Stacey L. Carrillo, M.S.  
Oregon State University PhD Candidate

## Appendix G

### Script: Initial Contact with Potential Participants



Dear Potential Participants:

This initial screening will begin by reviewing the eligibility criteria. In order to be eligible you:

- Must be over the age of 18;
- Must be enrolled in a doctoral Counselor Education program that uses a hybrid or blended learning format, (programs that utilize both face-to-face and online instruction, with a substantial proportion of the content delivered online and a reduced number of face-to-face classes);
- Must have successfully completed one full academic year, and are in the second or any subsequent year of the doctoral program, or have graduated within the previous 12 months of participating in this study;
- Must have a Masters degree in Counseling, School Counseling, Clinical Mental Health Counseling, College Personnel Counseling, or Community Counseling.
- Must professionally identify as a counselor and not another helping professional, such as social worker, psychologist, or nurse;
- Must have a goal of working at least part time as a counselor educator upon completion of doctoral degree;
- Must have an interest in and ability to explore their professional identity as a counselor and counselor educator.

After reading the criteria for participation, are you still interested in being considered for this study?

- If no, thank you for your time and I will destroy what information I have, i.e. name and contact information.
- If yes, I will review the Verbal Consent Guide with you now.

Thank you for consenting to participate in this study, I will now review the criteria again, to establish your eligibility:

- Are you over the age of 18?
- Are you enrolled in a doctoral Counselor Education program that uses a hybrid or blended learning format, or have graduated within the previous 12 months of participating in study?
  - If you are a student, have you successfully completed one full academic year of your program?

- Do you have a Masters degree in Counseling, School Counseling, Clinical Mental Health Counseling, College Personnel Counseling, or Community Counseling?
- Do you professionally identify as a counselor and not another helping professional, such as social worker, psychologist, or nurse?
- Do you have a goal of working at least part time as a counselor educator at the completion of your doctoral degree?
- Do you have an interest in and ability to explore your professional identity as a counselor and counselor educator?

If you answered yes to the above questions, we would like your assistance.

Under the supervision of Dr. Deborah Rubel, I (Stacey L. Carrillo) am recruiting doctoral students currently in, or recent graduates of, a nontraditional Counselor Education doctoral program. Nontraditional program is defined as being a hybrid or blended learning format. Hybrid or blended learning formats utilize both face-to-face and online instruction, with a substantial proportion of the content delivered online and a reduced number of face-to-face classes. This study is titled, "A Grounded Theory Study of How Doctoral Students in a Nontraditional Counselor Education Program Experience the Development of Professional Identity".

For this study, you will be asked to participate in three rounds of interviews. Each interview will be approximately 45 minutes and will take place on a dates and times convenient to you. The total expected time commitment if you agree to participate in this study will be approximately three hours.

- What questions can I answer for you?
- So that I am sure that you understand what the study involves, would you please tell me what you think I am asking you to do?
- In your own words, can you tell me what the biggest risk might be if you enroll in this study?

Please do not hesitate to contact either one of us should you have any questions.

Stacey Carrillo– Student Researcher  
 Email: [carrills@onid.orst.edu](mailto:carrills@onid.orst.edu)  
 Telephone: (702)767-0734

Deborah J. Rubel, Ph.D. – Principal Investigator  
 Email: [deborah.rubel@oregonstate.edu](mailto:deborah.rubel@oregonstate.edu)  
 Telephone: (541)737-5973

## Appendix H

### Verbal Consent Guide



**Purpose.** The purpose for this study is to increase the understanding of the experiences of doctoral students as they develop their professional identity as counselor educators in a nontraditional instructional program, such as a hybrid or blended learning format.

There is a lack of knowledge in the counseling field about the professional identity develop process of doctoral students in a nontraditional instructional Counselor Education program. This research aims to address this lack of knowledge by developing a theory and creating an understanding of the experiences of doctoral students in nontraditional educational doctoral programs as they develop their professional identity as counselor educators.

This study is being conducted by a student for the completion of a dissertation and will include interviews with up to ten participants.

**Activities.** Participating in this study will involve three rounds of interviews that will take approximately 45 minutes each. In the interviews, you will be asked some questions about your personal and academic history, but mostly about your experiences developing your professional identity as a counselor educator in a nontraditional doctoral Counselor Education program. A member check will be conducted by email after all three interviews have been done, data has been analyzed and a theory has emerged. This will be an opportunity to provide feedback about whether your respective views, feelings and experiences are represented in the theory. You will have seven days to provide this feedback.

The interviews will take place by phone on a date and time that is convenient for you and your total time commitment to the study will be approximately three hours. The study will last no more than five months. All interviewing sessions will be audio recorded. Once the interviews are transcribed and checked for accuracy, the recordings will be destroyed.

You are advised to not enroll in this study if you do not want to be recorded. A copy of the interview transcript, with all identifying information removed will be emailed to you. This will be an opportunity for you to make comments, corrections, or remove any information you feel may identify you. You will have four days to let me know by email, any comments you have or changes you would like made. All information gathered in this study will be confidentially stored at OSU for at least three years.

**Risks.** The interviews will cause no physical or economic risk to you. The interviews are confidential and the information gained in the interviews will be reported in a way that minimizes risk of you being identified. However, there is always a small chance that something accidental could risk confidentiality.

The greatest possible risk may be psychological. This study requires a level of self-awareness and reflection. Feeling extremely emotional is very unlikely. As a counselor, I am trained to process emotional reactions and decide if there is a need to refer to an expert or to stop our interview. The interview questions will be general and auto-biographical. Because of this, you are not likely to feel distressed.

**Benefits.** There are no known direct benefits to you in participating in this study. Your participation will help to contribute to the professions of counseling, and counselor education and supervision. You will also be contributing to the body of knowledge about professional identity development, specifically for doctoral student in a hybrid or blended counselor education program.

**Voluntariness.** Participation in this study is up to you. This study is not part of any class requirement. If you decide to participate, you are free to stop at any time without penalty. You will not be treated differently if you decide to stop being a part of the study. Choosing or not choosing to be in this study will not in any way impact your relationship with your Counselor Education program. If you choose to withdraw from this project before it ends, the researchers may keep information collected about you. This information may be included in study reports.

**Contact information.** If you have any questions about this project, please contact the student researcher, Stacey Carrillo, at (702)767-0734. Email: carrills@onid.orst.edu. You may also choose to contact the primary investigator, Deborah J. Rubel, Ph.D. at: (541)737-5973. Email: deborah.rubel@oregonstate.edu. If you have questions about your rights or welfare as a participant, please contact the Oregon State University Institutional Review Board (IRB) Office, at (541) 737-8008 or by email at IRB@oregonstate.edu

**Sponsor.** There is no sponsor

Office of the Institutional Review Board  
Oregon State University  
A312 Kerr Administration Bldg, Corvallis, OR 97331-2140  
ph. (541) 737-8008 fax (541) 737-3093  
IRB@oregonstate.edu  
<http://oregonstate.edu/irb>

## **Appendix I**

### **First Round of Interviews**

#### **Introduction**

The initial set of data for this grounded theory study on professional identity development consisted of semi structured interviews conducted by phone. There were a total of nine participants, each of whom identified as counselors and were either currently enrolled or had recently graduated from a hybrid/blended doctoral program in Counselor Education and Supervision. Each participant was licensed in their respective states. The following licenses were held collectively by the study participants: 3 LPCP; 2 LMHC; 1 LMFT; 1 LPCC; 2 Dual LPC/LMFT. Geographically, there was representation from the North West, West, Mid-West, East, and South. Gender make-up of the participants was seven females and two males. Years working as a practicing counselor ranged from six to sixteen. Seven participants self-identified as White/Euro American, one self-identified as Hispanic/Latino and one identified as having a Mixed Race background. Given the limited number of hybrid/blended doctoral counselor education and supervision programs that have been established, it was not surprising that the participants came from only three different programs.

The initial interview questions used were as follows:

1. How would you describe your professional identity before entering this hybrid doctoral program in counselor education?
2. What feelings do you have about your professional identity development process so far?
3. Describe your experience of becoming a counselor educator while in this hybrid doctoral program?
4. What critical experiences in your hybrid program have you had that have helped

- and hindered your professional identity development as a counselor educator?
5. What experiences outside your hybrid program have you had that have helped and hindered your professional identity development as a counselor educator?

The interviews were audio taped and then transcribed. Each transcription was reviewed multiple times for accuracy and then de-identified and sent to the respective participant to again check for accuracy and allow her/him to further de-identify if necessary. Once final approval was received from each participant the analysis of the data began.

In general, my initial impressions from the first round of interviews were that it appeared that the participants struggled with understanding what professional identity is, though each one seemed to think they had a very good grasp of the concept. None of them could articulate it very well. Each one identified in very concrete terms such as the type of counselor they are, i.e. working with children, or their theoretical orientation, i.e. Rogerian, or simply I am just a counselor. While professional identity can be a very nebulous concept, the participants made no comments about basic philosophical tenets of being a counselor, such as having a holistic, preventative, wellness stance, or that of following a social justice or advocacy model, or even reference to professional organizations or code of ethics.

Some initial impressions and thought about the participants expressed through ongoing memoing are as follows: The first participant, P1, was at the data collection stage and though she was positive in general about her program, she did express some frustration about her dissertation process. She indicated that a contributing factor to her success in the program and with developing identity as a CES can be attributed to having a mentor. She found a mentor, who was also a faculty member in her program, within the

first two years of her program. The second participant, P2, had a very interesting story about her career path to becoming a counselor educator, but her experiences in general seemed to diverge a bit from the other participants. She had a lot of training experience with training counselors in a State program. The third participant, P3, identified mostly as a addictions counselor and really seemed to expand his sense of identity with his doctoral program. He spoke a lot about how his program really focused on professional identity, but I got the feeling he had never really thought about it much before.

P4 had a rehabilitation background and was very positive about her experience in her program. She felt that the online program exposed her to various individuals all over the country and she felt staying connected by phone was easy. P5 was just about to defend her dissertation around the time of the interview and was very excited about everything. She relayed in her narrative many ways in which she developed as a counselor educator from being exposed to various types of counseling through her peers and being given opportunities to teach. P6 participant also had a unique circumstance in that he had completed all of the course work for a land based doctoral program 10 years ago, but never finished. This participant had the unique experience of having participated in both a face-to-face program and a hybrid program. When asked about the differences in his experiences with each program, his response focused on the 10 year time lapse and how far the counseling profession had come, specifically with establishing a more solid identity.

The last three interviews (P7, P8, and P9) were diverse in that I was able to get a participant from third institution, making a total of three different institutions that the participants came from. I like the idea of this because of the variety of experiences that

can be shared. P7 had just recently graduated and was in an assistant faculty position. She had a lot of experience as a clinician and had been teaching for a while. She was very open and honest about the fact that she had never really given her professional identity much thought until she entered the hybrid doctoral program. She expressed feeling like she had to do a lot of work to catch up with her peers regarding her professional identity, not just as a CES, but a counselor in general. P8 had also just graduated, and she was the only school counselor in the program. Interesting moment with P8 was her stating that one of the impairments to her identity development was her current job as a school counselor. Since she had recently graduated, she wanted to move one with the next step of her career and obtain a CES position, and still having her current job felt as if it was stunting her development further. P9 was still in her program and not quite finished with her course work. This participant expressed having a very positive experience going to her first ACES conference. She expressed feeling positive energy, feeling welcomed by the profession, and supported by her current faculty and faculty from her Masters program that she ran into. These initial thoughts and impression were the very beginnings of immersing in the data.

Actual analysis of the data began with open coding of each of the transcripts. I began line by line assigning codes based on what my understanding of what each participant was saying. Through this analysis I would ask theoretical question such as “What is this participant trying to say” as a way of understanding any underlying meaning as I coded the data. Several codes identified were in vivo codes, in that the direct wording used by the participants was used as the initial coding. To better understand the data I then took the codes derived from the open coding process and I re-

organized the data into tables by each question asked of the participants. By doing this I was better able to see if themes began to emerge across participants. As themes began to emerge, I then used the same tables and color coded by emerging themes to see how prevalent each theme was between participants and the questions asked. The color coding showed how the major themes that were beginning to emerge were supported either directly or indirectly across participants. Throughout the open coding, I engaged in constant comparison and memoing to better identify the emerging categories and while understanding my reaction to the data. I was able to identify four major categories. Using constant comparison, these categories were further broken down into properties, which are sub-categories that add specificity to each primary category.

I then began doing some axial coding; I began to find relationships between categories and the beginning movements of a process or a theory. The interrelationships of the categories were then identified and supported by the narrative of the participants. Again, constant comparison was used to find the relationship between categories to find how one category may directly or indirectly affect another category. I then began to use visual models drafted to represent the categories and potential properties to better understand the inter relationships. Through this visual process, I not only got clarity on the properties of each category, the relationship between categories and the beginnings of a process or theory became clearer too.

In total I identified four thematic categories, and fourteen sub-categories. The following represents the categories and sub-categories that emerged from the data: first, EXPEREINCING HYBRID DOCTORAL CES PROGRAM, with properties of *Having a*

*Range of Feelings about Hybrid Program, Comparing Hybrid Program to Face-to-face Program, Engaging in Experiences Outside of the Program, and Having the Needed Personal Characteristics*; second, LEARNING HOW TO BE A CES, with properties of *Meeting Program Requirements, Engaging in CES Tasks, and Learning Vicariously*; third, CONNECTING WITH OTHERS, with properties of *Building Relationships, Interacting with Others, Receiving Feedback*; and fourth, EVOLVING SENSE OF SELF AND PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY (INTERNAL EXPERIENCE), with properties of *Having a Range of Emotions, Comparing Self to Others, Reflecting on Experience, and Feeling Supported*.

The following information represents each category and related property, along with definitions for each and supporting data in the form of participant quotes. The dimensional aspects of the properties begin to emerge in the definitions provided.

### **Experiencing a Hybrid Doctoral CES Program**

The first category EXPERIENCING HYBRID DOCTORAL CES PROGRAM really serves as the context for the process of professional identity development of the participants. It is because the participants are enrolled or have graduated from the hybrid program that has been the genesis of their experience of developing their professional identity and a CES. When sharing experiences about the hybrid program participants expressed having a range of emotions from feeling isolated, feeling frustrated, to feeling positive about the program and appreciative of its inherent flexibility. Comparisons were often made between the hybrid experience and their perceptions of what a traditional face-to-face program would have been like. These feelings and experiences were part of

the identity development process in that they again, provided the general context for the development of the participant's professional identity.

### **Having a Range of Emotions About Hybrid Program**

Many participants expressed a range of emotions when describing their experiences in the hybrid program. These emotions were focused more on feelings toward the actual program, and not the feeling that emerged related to professional identity development. In general feelings were positive about the hybrid/blended program. Positive comments about the program content, the flexibility of the program and being able still work and not have to relocate were expressed. Feelings of isolation at not having regular face-to-face contact with others who were going through similar experiences and frustration at not having regular access to faculty and experiential opportunities were also repeatedly shared.

P1: I know all of my friends agree that we now question the hybrid platform, it works for us in terms of working, and having families and stuff, but I think it's across the board we think we would have had a different experience if we did a more traditional format, um, traditional being brick and mortar and maybe getting a little bit more... I still think that when you don't have that day to day contact it, you lose something, especially for this type of profession where its known for having that contact and being able to build cohesiveness, you know, with the people that you're working with, whether they're clients or students, or you know even your colleagues, um, to be able to give the best that you can give.

P3: I guess my experience has been a mixture of like good and bad... good just because, you know with a hybrid program it does give you a lot of opportunities to, you know continue in school while you're working and all your other life stuff , you know, also it, it gives you all this information ...you know like I got all those different classes about you know professional identity and supervision and counseling and you know inundated with all this information, so , I mean to me that was like the good thing, I, I really liked that, you know...it's on my own terms... I just pick my classes I get all this information you know at home or, during work hours, or you know whenever I please I have access to it all...

the bad thing is you now with...especially my school where most of it is on just like a Blackboard forum discussion kind of, you know...asynchronous kind of communication there's no face-to-face or anything. With a lot of these concepts I wish that there was a little bit more ...communication...

so it's very like isolating knowing that like, ok I'm a Ph.D. student in counselor education and supervision I'm going through all these you know classes, going through all this process, going through a these internal changes, you know, ideological changes, counseling changes, classes changes and, no one around me that I can have a conversation with really understands...or identifies with what I'm going through...no matter what...

P5: It's kinda like how I went to get my Masters degree when I first started into the process, I just wanted the piece of paper and I wasn't very discerning about, how to go about that, or what kind of piece of paper to get, so in this it was oh this is a great program I don't have to, you know, move away across the country, I don't have upheave my husband, and my life ...

there was frustration, um it's like what the heck is a counselor educator and why aren't you teaching us how to teach and well how am I gonna learn that and where do I go for resources and so... (referencing program not being particularly nurturing) so there's been a tremendous I think frustration, sometimes for me , um, expressed by also some of my colleagues , um, but in the end I sure learned a lot, I couldn't tell you necessarily, you know, or quantify how I came about that learning, but, um, it was pretty significant...

P6: the online environment creates, you know you become, again good writers and good scholarship but, the lack of emotional interaction, the lack of collegial sort of ah...I'm just bantering, just being in the physical presence of, somebody I think has been the greatest hindrance because you can't , I mean we're all counselors we're all, counselors we're all counselor educators, I mean, want to be counselor educators, we're all relatively touchy-and-feely people, we like to see interaction we like to see, facial expressions we like to hear the tone of our voice we like to, you know rely upon the support from others ...

P9: And sometimes being in this, you know just this program it's like, I don't...talk to my cohort all the time versus, like in my, if I were in class with them all day and people that I interact with on a day to day basis, kind of have no idea of what I am doing...so, (laughter) I don't always get to talk about, these new things I'm putting into practice all the time, so it's really nice when I get to do that with the people who really know what I'm dealing with ...in whatever form, you know.

### **Comparing Hybrid Program to F2f Program**

As participants shared their experiences in the hybrid program most of them

compared their experience to what they believed they would have experienced in a traditional, face-to-face, program. This comparison centered around the perception of having less opportunity in the hybrid program for interaction with faculty, mentoring and for gaining CES experience such as teaching and supervising that is often available in a face-to-face format. This comparison also included many participants questioning the hybrid program and wondering if the hybrid program would be seen as less credible than a traditional program.

P1: I, I honestly feel that if it was a brick and mortar program that I could have gotten more, not to say that I feel I am lacking in any one thing considerably, but I feel, my thought is that if you, if I were in a brick and mortar school I would have had more quote unquote opportunities to work with counselor educators...

would have had quote unquote, more opportunities to be in the classroom uh, uh a more structured classroom, not to take away from the online experience I had, but, to develop that skill even further um, part of our residencies required that we actually worked with students, it was during intensives which could have been like 15 days, but it's something like a whole quarter or semester when you just in the classroom and your serving as a TA in a brick and mortar environment as opposed to a TA in strictly an online classroom.

P4: Well, all of it's all online, except for the residency and the, class counseling, a, internships. So, I was able to...make friends online with people ...and connect and call each other and talk about assignments and...which I found, online was easier to do, then when you're in a traditional setting. In the traditional setting, everybody has their own...little friendships and stuff. So, it's not fun to break into...meeting other people, I would say I mean you meet them cause you're in class with them... but online you know, you can call-em up and talk and you talk about the assignments and you brainstorm and, and I, and I liked that, it was a great experience.

P5: Well it's so diff, it, it's, without a frame of reference, I mean, you, you know it felt very different than what I would image a land based, um, Ph.D. process would have been like, um, and I imagined that would have been more nurturing going into it, and it wasn't particularly...

P7: I think that there is a certain expectation that goes with entering a doctoral program and I think , um, given the nature of online learning and hybrid learning and maybe kind of the historical stigma surrounding the same, I think that there is kind of this implicit...um, fear that other people will not take our degrees as seriously or...will

not back them... and so, if there is any indication that our...course work or our education activities might be somehow inferior to what we kind of imagined the traditional experience to be like , I, I think there's this little panic and we all kind of shut down and think, here it goes, everybody is right, you know our degree is not going to be that great.

P9: I think some of it is not being able to practice everything , so like I know in ah, more traditional program we would have access to, like the masters students or other undergrad courses that we could be teaching, just more opportunities to be doing the work already. I think not being on the, a, campus and access to stuff like that...

I think people still kind of, in general, view anything that's online as far as school goes as not as good as other programs, so like my work for example is kind of, oh that's nice. So, when I like offer to do any kind (laughter) of trainings, or like, practice my, new expertise, they kind of aren't as receptive to that.

### **Engaging in Experiences Outside of the Hybrid Program**

Engaging in outside experiences, whether it was to fulfill program requirements or to gain additional experience, appeared to be a significant component of the hybrid program and of identity development. Participants expressed teaching, supervising, presenting and attending conferences as critical to their identity development. With these experiences participants were able to connect with others, observe CES behaviors, and engaging in tasks and behaviors that are associated with being a CES.

P1: I finished my internship with them and I stayed on to volunteer to help them to develop additional programs, so if you want to look at outside of my program that would be something that came outside of my program , um, so I now work with one of the hospice providers in our area to develop programs and help bring awareness about hospice and palliative care to the, to the spiritual community um, as a whole in our area, in our county, so um, that has been really good...

P3: And I started identifying with that like mentor kind of like educator or supervisor I not even quite sure, because I wasn't technically their supervisor and I technically was not like their boss or anything but...you know I became more that mentor role and people just kept coming to me and asking me questions and you know running things by me like program changes or, hey, can you, you know, look over this new group and, um, that I'm gonna start and, you know, just evaluate for me and I found like myself falling into a lot more of those kind of roles on the outside, that later on I could tie in...you know, as I was like, progressing and I guess my identity was changing

that I could tie into in-school stuff that I ran into later on, and it helps my, you know, like make all the things click together...

P5: At this point I feel strong that I have a very broad background, and I am well equipped for most anything anybody could throw at me, in a lot of different arenas, so the breadth of the program was very beneficial for me and much of the learning seemed to occur outside of the classroom...

P6: I think the experiences outside that have helped, would be teaching as an adjunct professor, on and off for, almost twelve years so , teaching and interacting with students um, has really helped, um, presenting, professional presentations have really helped I always present at my, ah, local (inaudible word) counseling conference. Um, that's really helped and then maintaining, my relationships with counselors, um, counselor educators even, who I teach adjunct with I felt some friendship there so, ah, probably all of those things...

P8: learned that I needed to, to go to local conferences and present, it's not something that I probably would have ever thought about doing before, so it, um, as a result of being a part of the program and seeing what all these other people were doing, I learned to go present and I think I've done that four times now and...

P9: I went to the ACES conference for the first time this past fall... it was, that was a really great experience because I got to be around so many other people who do that, like that's what they do, they're counselor educators and supervisors and, you know, learning stuff from the conference sessions and then also just being around people who are really like, really happy that this was my first ACES and, like, happy that I was a doc student and so welcoming to the profession...

### **Having the Needed Personal Characteristics**

A few participants stated that in order to be successful in a hybrid program a person needs to be self-reliant, self-directed, motivated and organized. These comments imply that participants did not feel as though there was a lot of hand holding by faculty. Participants were given the basic instruction and it was up to them to get done what needed to get done. Further the sense of being on your own, and possibly not having the initial support that the participants were expecting. This further lends itself to comparing the hybrid experience to a traditional face-to-face experience.

P2: Well, another thing is my attitude... I think that that counts a lot...I am very organized, I prioritize...

P5: it was the expectations for comps and the dissertation process and the expectation that you just had to figure it out and get it done, that created a tremendous amount of, of self-reliance for me...because of the nature of the program there was a lot of self-reliance that was required...

And so if you aren't pretty self-driven it, this particular program I think could be very difficult and challenging, um, to be able to finish...

you go through this I went through a mental process of you know, was this a planned event or did this just kind of happened that, you knew it structured such that we're, really forced to be very, um, autonomous and self-reliant and and curious about how to get information that we need because it's certainly not being handed to anybody, um, on many levels but,

### **Learning How to be a CES**

Learning to be a Counselor Educator and Supervisor is a second category that emerged from the data. This category involves learning new information from course content, to doing experiential learning activities such as completing the program internship, learning vicariously through interacting with peers and observing faculty, and engaging in tasks associated with being a CES. It is a combination of these various learning opportunities that appear to move the participants forward in their PID. The following are the properties that emerged, along with supporting participant data.

### **Meeting the Program Requirements**

Meeting the program requirements begins with the coursework, learning about the profession, and meeting the program requirements. Conceptual learning about the history of the counseling profession, gave several participants an understanding of how far the profession has come and a sense pride. A few participants cited that just being in the

program made them feel more like a CES. The required internship gave participants and opportunity to apply newly learned conceptual knowledge and begin engaging in CES type tasks, i.e. teaching, supervising, and leadership.

P1: I did my internship with one of the big hospice providers in our area, so I had to create a one day seminar for them that I actually had to teach and they had to rate me on, so um it wasn't in the classroom...I had to create this and what I did is I built on what my emphasis is on my dissertation and I talked about the statistical portion of it and what we need to look at and what was amazing was the lady who they had hired, the doctor who they had hired to uh oversee their palliative care uh actually showed up and everyone was surprised that she'd showed up and she grilled me the way that I expect I'm going to be grilled at the end of this dissertation when I have to defend, um so I don't know if she did it intentionally, but um, she wanted me to look at what I was presenting in a different light and um, I, I appreciated what she did...

when I started, like with my Ph.D. program...just like within the first few semesters, it made me feel like counselor, and a counselor educator and counselor supervisor but, like all of it together was a much more complex and...like esteemed profession...

with like how it, gave me a sense of pride and all that, I attribute that to the program, I mean that helped my Identity a lot just because, you know, it, it gave me all that background information, you know and like current information and more in-depth ...you know, there was, there's a lot of focus and a lot of the program work on what it is to be a counselor and, you know, a counselor educator and, you know a supervisor, how all those roles, you know, play with each other play, you know, in the profession so a lot of that like really helped give me a grounding for what I'm supposed to be, now and in the future ...

P4: learning about the different teaching techniques and, the curriculum was absolutely wonderful, and all the professors are great, they're really very helpful, willing to work with you. It, it's just a really nice...feeling I liked it, it was good.

In all of the courses there usually was, some form of an assignment where you explored how your professional identity ...in one of the examples that comes to mind, one, one of the beginning classes was, to um, reflect on a teacher, throughout your life that had the most influence on you and how that impacted, had that influence on you and, you know, basically how you got to where you are...

P5: but the thought of trying to go out and try and find a teaching position as an adjunct for at least term or semester in order to satisfy that aspect of the internship was frankly terrifying at first, and not anything that I had really concretely thought about in going into the program, um, so I, I, I thought okay I have to have this aspect of this

internship satisfied, how can I do this, then I contacted XXX where I had gotten my Masters program and they um, were needing an adjunct teacher for summer semester and I thought okay let's just jump on it and after I signed up for it...

P7: the doctoral program was the first time I had ever really been asked to reflect upon my professional identity, um, and there were, you know, a couple of times within the classroom that we were given the opportunity to speak up and give our perspective on various issues, but, I think what contributed most to my professional identity throughout the program were some really, really well-crafted assignments that um, really implored me to utilize some of the theories that we had discussed in class and really apply them to my own practice and how I would do things. So, for example; ah, one assignment that I remember completing was a clin, clinician disclosure and supervisor disclosure and while I had done those for my professional work in the past, I never spent a lot of time really thinking about theories and just the fact that it was an academic assignment. We had to provide references throughout our disclosure, so it was really the first time that I, um, was very, very thoughtful about how theory applied to my practice...

P9: then the rest of it was like when I was actually learning stuff, so through the course work, I felt like I was picking up stuff that would be useful ...and now I have on the horizon actually teaching and I have supervised some masters students as part of their practicum and internship and...um, so learning more about, being a (inaudible). It's been helpful and just the general how to of it.

I think I took the counselor education course in the fall, so that was kind of the beginning of my second year, and that was for sure a big turning point when I realized like oh, I have a lot of these skills that I already needed and I have a lot of really good ideas about stuff that I could do in courses with students that are...you know, as good as anyone else's ideas...

### **Engaging in CES Tasks**

CES tasks are defined as teaching, supervising, mentoring, presenting or attending conferences, and conducting research. Participants indicated that by doing these tasks they were able to apply conceptual knowledge and skills they observed others doing such as peers and faculty, and it also gave them a sense of being a CES. Generally this was also accompanied by receiving feedback from others as well.

P1: Working as an instructor through my internships and things like that I, I really began to um associate more with counselor educators being more of a counselor educator and I think my whole uh I'm geared more toward the counselor educator, as opposed to

just a counselor, um it's something that I know that I really want to do full time and I'm, I'm doing everything in my power to get there...

so what it did is it opened me up so they can say okay she capable of doing this, she is a good presenter, um, she did well with the piece that she did and so they, so their thing is can you do this for us again, and I do all my work with them is volunteer at this point. I finished my internship with them and I stayed on to volunteer to help them to develop additional programs...

P3: and I started identifying with that like mentor kind of like educator or supervisor I not even quite sure, because I wasn't technically their supervisor and I technically was not like their boss or anything but...you know I became more that mentor role and people just kept coming to me and asking me questions and you know running things by me like program changes or, hey, can you, you know, look over this new group and, um, that I'm gonna start and, you know, just evaluate for me and I found like myself falling into a lot more of those kind of roles on the outside, that later on I could tie in...you know, as I was like, progressing and I guess my identity was changing that I could tie into in-school stuff that I ran into later on, and it helps my, you know, like make all the things click together.

P5: At this point I feel strong that I have a very broad background, and I am well equipped for most anything anybody could throw at me, in a lot of different arenas, so the breadth of the program was very beneficial for me and much of the learning seemed to occur outside of the classroom...

I contacted XXX where I had gotten my Masters program and they um, were needing an adjunct teacher for summer semester and I thought okay let's just jump on it and after I signed up for it...I got excited about helping people learn...

P6: I think the experiences outside that have helped, would be teaching as an adjunct professor, on and off for, almost twelve years so, teaching and interacting with students um, has really helped, um, presenting, professional presentations have really helped I always present at my, ah, local (inaudible word) counseling conference.

P8: Um, probably as I started working with masters level students, um, in teaching, as I was doing my internship I was teaching some classes, so I was in a different position, than I had been before. And then, as I worked directly in a supervisory role with the masters level school counseling students, um...I felt more ah, more like a counselor educator than a school counselor... it became more real I suppose is, is what it was. It wasn't just, I was reading about, again, more counseling stuff or thinking ok, there's my professor up there in the front of the class and...you know, that's, he's teaching me and I'm learning from him, but all of a sudden it was like, wow I can do that too...

P9: I went to the ACES conference for the first time this past fall...and it was, that was a really great experience because I got to be around so many other people who

do that, like that's what they do, they're counselor educators and supervisors and, you know, learning stuff from the conference sessions and then also just being around people who are really like, really happy that this was my first ACES and, like, happy that I was a doc student and so welcoming to the profession...

I'm going to be doing some work, TAing and that kind of thing and I'll be having...experience working in the online hybrid setting too which is really desirable,

### **Learning Vicariously**

Additional learning occurred through interacting with peers/students and learning about the diversity in the profession as far as types of counseling, work environments, and client population. Additionally, observing faculty or other professionals effectively teach and supervise allowed participants to assess and determine different styles to emulate or discard.

P1: I want to be able to counsel and teach the way that she can teach...and um, I, I remember feeling as though, okay is she going to look at me and think less than because I am not where she is, knowing that she, you know we had had conversations that she was there to help me and teach and train me...

P5: I actually got fabulous, vicarious school counseling, counselor education through, oh goo, XXX, one of my classmates, who um, started out living in (Inaudible), and move to, well she got, she's the one who got the job at XXX...

I learned so much about what it is to be a school counselor because that was another thing that I was very naïve about, so it was this process of vicarious education through my peers, through then having the, uh, the requirement have an aspect of teaching in my uh, internship and, just seeing the process itself of, you know being in higher ed. And what that looked like in our actual program that made it appealing and feel obtainable for me.

the experiences within the program were witnessing effective teaching techniques, um, experiencing teachers that I felt communicated the material in a way that made rich and integratable, and then (inaudible) witnessing...some teachers that, some instructors that, professors that were less than dynamic...

P9: I was kind of motivated to maybe, propose to present at like WACES or other conferences, cause it seemed like once I saw the level of it, I was like, oh I can do some of this, you know...some people were like, really amazing, but others were like newer

professionals kind of presenting on their research or, just kinda stuff that they had noticed or were working on their research. Oh I could totally do it! I just see how I started to fit into this world and kind of where I would be in a new professional kind of way and then ultimately down the line

### **Connecting with Others**

Having some sort of face-to-face interaction with others emerged as a significant theme or category. Connecting encompassed everything from building and maintaining relationships, to interacting in an informal way such as with networking, to just observing others already in a professional or teaching role. Consistently participants cited that making connections, interacting or having relationships with others were critical experiences to their identity development. It was also expressed that the absence of interacting, not being able to connect, and/or having negative interactions was considered a hindrance to identity development.

### **Building or Having Relationships**

A key component to the identity development was building relationships with faculty/mentors and fellow students, or having established relationships outside of the program with family and friends. Building relationships with faculty/mentors provided the participants with a role model and a person to go to with question, concerns, or ideas about their professional development. Relationships with peers, or fellow students gave participants the opportunity to share their current experiences with those who are having the same experiences, i.e. enrolled in a hybrid doctoral program. Having relationships with peers allowed for comparison of the participant's progress and also opened up the participant's understanding of the diversity within the counseling profession itself. Additionally, these relationships also contributed to the participant's sense feeling

supported and belonging to a larger community. Several participants indicated that without the support of family and friends they would not have been able to pursue the doctoral hybrid program.

P1: I, I can kind of walk through how I felt in different phases of the process uh, and how that worked for me and how I had to kinda embrace it and part of it was getting a mentor um, to, to kinda bounce stuff off of and to be, to develop a relationship with, that could help me, and I believe that I needed that because I was in the program I was in

P6: it was a challenge, it wasn't, it wasn't impossible I think I did pretty good at developing some really strong friendships , that then turned into a variety of, of presentations I think I have presented with my, colleagues that I met in the, my second residency. I presented with them, three or four times at, at state and a regional and, and at, ah, the national conference with the ACA so , I would say it was a challenge that's hit the moderate difficulty, it takes effort it doesn't happen easily like it would if you were, seeing each other every week, um but between phone calls and Skype and face time and then all the opportunities that are out there...um, it's possible it's, it's, I don't know , it's moderately challenging it's not easy.

P7: I think that the experiences that helped me the most were actually kind of the downtime experiences that I had with my cohort, where we weren't necessarily engaging in a particular assignment or class discussion, but really kind of had more of a free flowed discussion and we were just able to kind of...build a deep rapport and trust and have discussions regarding professional identity in which we didn't feel we had to relate everything back to the theory of the week, or whatever.

P9: like talking with my advisor, just kind of learning about what, like transferable skills I really have. Because before I was a counselor, I worked with kids and I did like team building and that kind of thing and, so how can I use the stuff that I already know how to do or that I'm already doing as a counselor and then, grow that into being a counselor educator, so maybe it, so it was more like, not starting from scratch...

So, there has been some of that, that's been fostered and kind of grown by, my advisor and everybody else in the cohort. Now I really do feel a lot more competent about it . Cause like I'm about to be done with my second year and done with the course work, um...and about to be doing it. And so I feel really hopeful and really confident about it. I think there is still some hesitations, some anxiety, some doubt and I think that doubt comes and goes now a little bit more than it did before...but...

## Interacting with Others

Participants conveyed that interactions with others, in class, at conferences, and in the workplace, were critical to the development of their professional identity. In these interactions participants, were able to observe others already in the role of CES and were able to engage in CES tasks. These interactions lead to participant feeling accepted, supported and part of a larger community. Participants conveyed a sense of being perceived by others as a CES was important to their development.

P1: I think what helped me inside of my program was, uh getting connected with others to be able to network with, with some of my professors...

but I still think that when you don't have that day to day contact it, you lose something, especially for this type of profession where its known for having that contact and being able to build cohesiveness, you know, with the people that you're working with, whether their clients or students, or you know even your colleagues, um, to be able to give the best that you can give...

P2: but when I had my first residency that was shortly after I started the program...those fears disappear and this a community and not only a community, this is, ahh, an opportunity that I had have to, to meet with people in Japan, in Korea, Africa, the Islands, Hawaii, you name it, I have met people from all over the world ...who are going through the same program that I am going, who have been to my classes, who seek me in the organization e-mails...

P3: Because, like okay, where I was, or where I still am...there's no one around me that is going through the same experience... so it's very like isolating knowing that like, ok I'm a Ph.D. student in counselor education and supervision I'm going through all these you know classes, going through all this process, going through a these internal changes, you know, ideological changes, counseling changes, classes changes and, no one around me that I can have a conversation with really understands...or identifies with what I'm going through...no matter what.

I think the residencies were one of the best things of the entire program. Because it, you know, it's the opposite of what I was saying, you're thrown in with, you know, twenty, thirty, a hundred, two hundred people all going through that same experience and all with, you know the same, um goals in mind and going through the same stuff. So that was one of the best experiences from the program.

P4: I would say the experiences...that um...were most, most helpful, definitely would be the residencies that I attended. They were helpful because you got to meet people and you got to learn about ...you know you got to meet the professors, you got to learn about the school, um, like they had the (inaudible) people there, they had the

admissions people there, they had the professors there...you got to really connect with them and, and...understand the missions and the goals of the program.

P5: the exposure to a really diverse group of individuals , um, in my cohort, um, as...representative of different professions and yet still desiring to be counselor educators , ah, was a really rich experience for me, just their varied backgrounds, watching how their minds worked , um...just their interactions and like I was saying, the support, particularly when I was stretched to my max during comps, um, the, the camaraderie, the, the sense of belonging, the connection was huge ...

P6: I would say helped has been, the residencies, um, the the level to which we interact with colleagues and faculty is, is just unparalleled. So I think that has helped because I form, you form very intimate relationships with, with your fellow students and your colleagues , because you know, you're nine days, trapped in a hotel room and...and ah, and it's pretty intense, and and, I think not only those interactions but interacting with some really cool people and, really smart, intelligent and experienced people, I think that is as elemental as the interaction, the intimate for the lack of a better word, interaction with my colleagues and my faculty, during the residencies has probably been, been the most important.

online environment creates, you know you become, again good writers and good scholarship but, the lack of emotional interaction, the lack of collegial sort of ah...I'm just bantering, just being in the physical presence of, somebody I think has been the greatest hindrance because you can't , I mean we're all counselors we're all, counselors we're all counselor educators, I mean, want to be counselor educators, we're all relatively touchy-and-feely people, we like to see interaction we like to see, facial expressions we like to hear the tone of our voice we like to, you know rely upon the support from others ...

P7: the doctoral program gave me a lot of opportunity to interact with professionals throughout the country... um, of varying backgrounds. I found that I had more, um, interactive discussions kind of during breaks and lunch and stuff like that ...where we would kind of talk about assignments or talk about what we had been reading... and I was exposed to kind of different points of view on the same literature .

my thoughts regarding counseling and counselor education in general are much more developed that they were, you know, three or four years ago . I, I think I'm very much in the process of still learning though, um ...I find myself kind of craving interactions with other professionals...

P8: Um, but I think the, the actual relationships & the face-to-face meetings were the most helpful, getting to know the professors and learning what their particular, you know, theoretical views are and you know, does that fit with I do, or does it not and learning from their various styles, um...I, when I got to the point of internship and dissertation I had, I worked with two, wonderful school counselor educators, um, when before it had been just um, mental health counseling in general and then , at the very end with the internship and dissertation it was with two school counseling educators and they

were fabulous and I will always remember the, the wonderful things that I learned from them.

P9: the face-to-face meetings have been really helpful , um...you know some of the distance piece or the online piece is like, not feeling as connected and um , not having as much access immediately to...um, the professors and that kind of thing . They're super accessible via like e-mail and all that stuff but it's just really nice just to be able to have a face-to-face conversation where things bounce back-n-forth in the moment. Um, so being able to be face-to-face, or having access to my advisor, like via phone or Adobe Connect instead of e-mail has been really helpful. Um, I also think, a lot of the...like interactions that we have between cohort members, so us commenting on each other's work, sharing experience, that kind of thing; whether it's face-to-face or online, it's been really helpful.

### **Receiving Feedback**

Receiving feedback from others, such as faculty or other professionals, was cited as having a positive impact on the identity development process. Through receiving the feedback participant's gained confidence in their skills and abilities, which progressed their identity development. Some participants cited that receiving feedback also provided an opportunity to reflect on their experiences and their evolving identity. Conversely, receiving feedback that was perceived as being placating or as not being authentic hindered identity development.

P2: Ah, when you go to residencies, ah, when I, I went to residencies that the lar, the biggest impact...feeling, doing and, and seeing my professionals, listening to them . My experience as a teacher for the Masters student, ah, the feedback that I received from the director of the, ah, counselor educator and supervisor, ah, ah, faculty and the director, so those are the biggest impact that solidified my identity. So, they in, they inspect, put the seal on what I truly believe is me. So that was my biggest experience as teacher and receiving so many positive feedback from the Master, ah, professors. They says you are awesome, you're a natural, ah, all those who have observed my teaching gave me the same...um...ah, the same feed-back, of course.

P5: my major advisor had mentioned that of the 17 or 18 people in our cohort, um, she was really open that I was least counselor educated oriented of, of the group... well I guess, I heard a bit of criticism in that , um, which made sen, it didn't make sense at the time because, I , I was, in there for the end purpose, I wanted a Ph.D. ... I think her comment got me thinking in more along the lines of, oh I wonder what that's like

because I always felt a bit different that most of my cohort mates, um, in terms of there weren't more than, I think maybe 1, 1 or 2 of us that were in just the focus of practice...

P9: I ran into some of my masters professors there and they were like so excited that I had gone on to a doc program and, they were like, let us know how we can be of any use or what, if you just want to pick our brain and so...

Um, but I think a lot of it came from working with my advisor ...who has been like pointing out those kinda things already. Like, oh yes you would be really good at this, or...um, that would be a really great thing for when you're working with your future students; like he's been throwing that stuff in there from the very beginning.

### **Feeling Supported**

Participant's expressed feeling supported through interactions with others.

Interactions with faculty and peers that were positive helped with identity development, and afforded the participants possible role models to emulate. Conversely interactions that were negative, perceived as challenging, or inauthentic, hindered identity development. Feeling supported by family and friends was also cited as an important factor to identity development. Having the support of family and friends enabled participants to dedicate the time and energy needed to pursue the doctoral degree and the other experiential activities needed to continue to develop as a CES. Interacting with others in the counseling community, whether it was at professional conferences or on in a work environment, led to participants feeling that they were being perceived as CES, which in turn aided in their identity development. A sense of belonging was also expressed by some of the participants as they forged relationships, interacted with others, and attended conferences.

P1: I can't really say that I have had like a, I've had a lot of support outside, and even within the program, I have had a lot of support outside of the program...

I had to create a one day seminar... and what I did is I built on what my emphasis is on my dissertation and I talked about the statistical portion of it and what we need to look at and what was amazing was the lady who they had hired, the doctor who they had hired to uh oversee their palliative care uh actually showed up and everyone was

surprised that she'd showed up and she grilled me the way that I expect I'm going to be grilled at the end of this dissertation when I have to defend, um so I don't know if she did it intentionally, but um, she wanted me to look at what I was presenting in a different light and um, I, I appreciated what she did... I say the next couple weeks I will be doing another presentation for them for...so what it did is it opened me up so they can say okay she capable of doing this, she is a good presenter...

P2: I brought my family into my program, and this is what I am doing, this is what I cannot do anymore, so it's your duty to do it, ah, so, my family, ah, had been here, constantly to take over what I used to do and I'm not doing anymore, I am a full time student and, this is what I want to do and they are supporting me 200%. Of course I'm working. And that is the key! If you do not have support from those around you, you cannot do cyber...

P4: I would say that the most helpful outside of the program is the support that I get from friends and family and colleagues...in regards to working on my Ph.D....

P5: certainly the support of my peers, written comps was literally terrifying for me and my peers were instrumental, um, I was in two different study groups and they were huge in, oh, reflecting that I could do this thing that I was terrified of and, the more it supported me in process...

P9: throughout the course of it there's, there has been some hopefulness, because if it was all like, oh I can't do this then I wouldn't still be here I don't think. So, there has been some of that, that's been fostered and kind of grown by, my advisor and everybody else in the cohort. Now I really do feel a lot more competent about it...

but I think a lot of it came from working with my advisor ...who has been like pointing out those kinda things already. Like, oh yes you would be really good at this, or...um, that would be a really great thing for when you're working with your future students; like he's been throwing that stuff in there from the very beginning.

### **Evolving Sense of Self and Identity (Internal Experience)**

From the beginning of the program and throughout a few participants expressed various emotional states. Feelings of self-doubt were present at the beginning of the program, and generally expressed prior to taking on new tasks or experiences. As participants learned and developed through their experiences, in general feelings of self began to evolve and feelings of competence and confidence were expressed. Through this process many participants shared comparing self to others, either peers/fellow students,

or faculty as a way of understanding were they were in the process, and/or where they ultimately wanted to be. Finally, some participants expressed that reflecting on their experiences was part of understanding and developing their professional identity.

### **Having a Range of Emotions**

The range of emotions that participants expressed included feelings of self-doubt, feeling like an imposter, anxiety, frustration, hopefulness, confidence, competence and a feeling of “I can do this” in relation to becoming a CES. These evolving feelings were tied to new experiences, such as beginning the program, teaching, supervising, and presenting. Feelings became increasingly more positive as experience was gained and feedback was received.

P1: I remember being a little hesitant and I remember being, feeling a little, you know, out-a-sorts with it initially and uh thinking I, can I really do this... I , I remember coming into a classroom the first time and uh, feeling in ah of my first residency where I had to actually sit under a counselor educator, and thinking I want to be like her , you know, I want to be able to do this, I, I can do counseling like she can teach, but I want to be able to counsel and teach the way that she can teach...and um, I , I remember feeling as though, okay is she going to look at me and think less than because I am not where she is , knowing that she, you know we had had conversations that she was there to help me and teach and train me, but I just, you know you, you wonder, well, for me I wondered if I could do this, you know if I could really pull it off , you know that way just seems so second nature for her, um so I remember really feeling inept, um and, and, and unprepared to teach and um but I also remember getting to that point where I felt like, okay I can do this, its, its not as hard as I , I need to not be so hard on myself...I feel very comfortable with it now, but I remember not being comfortable with it...

P2: So, they in, they inspect, put the seal on what I truly believe is me. So that was my biggest experience as teacher and receiving so many positive feedback from the Master, ah, professors. They says you are awesome, you're a natural, ah, all those who have observed my teaching gave me the same...um...ah, the same feed-back, of course. Nervousness was, they are present all the time, I was shaking throughout, ah but I let, I let me to come out, rather than focus on the observation piece that I was observed for eight days teaching, ah, no, I...just forgot about that and I allowed me to come out. And as the professors were putting a seal on it, it more comfort, ah, the more, more comfortable I became.

P7: Well if I wanted to be really honest with you , I think at first there was a little bit intimidation , um, and it was kind of like, oh crap, that this is, this is a core component of counseling and...I'm already a licensed counselor and, and I'm, I haven't done this work. So I feel, you know, at first it was...sheer intimidation and it wasn't the panic and maybe not even a little bit of frustration that I was able to get as far as I did professionally without, doing what is probably very, very foundational work . Um, and then after that kind of initial...um, intimidation and panic wore off , I think I became kind of almost invigorated, like really excited to kind of engage in the work and I realized that, um, I was in an environment where I had the ability and the tools to kind of engage in it; so I felt pretty motivated . Um, and I think over time, throughout the program, I've, I kind of engaged with other people and really kind of , put forth a good amount of effort in some of those really tailored assignments, um , I became a lot more confident in myself as a counselor and a counselor educator and supervisor.

P9: like at the beginning there were a lot of feelings of self-doubt , um, anxiety , um, just some negativity and then, throughout the course of it there's, there has been some hopefulness, because if it was all like, oh I can't do this then I wouldn't still be here I don't think. So, there has been some of that, that's been fostered and kind of grown by, my advisor and everybody else in the cohort. Now I really do feel a lot more competent about it...

### **Comparing Self to Others**

Many participants expressed comparing themselves to others as part of the identity development process. Comparing themselves to other students in terms of experience, understanding of material learned through coursework, and prior experience related to being a CES. Some participants compared themselves to the faculty they had observed and expressed wanting to be like them, in terms of knowledge and skills.

P1: feeling in ah of my first residency where I had to actually sit under a counselor educator, and thinking I want to be like her , you know, I want to be able to do this, I, I can do counseling like she can teach, but I want to be able to counseling and teach the way that she can teach

P7: I think other people, again, I am kind of embarrassed by this , but I think other people in their past academic experiences, for example in their masters program, had really been pushed to reflect on this...professional identity, much harder than I had and I think there was this kind of ...um...maybe unconscious motivation where I felt, not necessarily inferior to my peers, but it was very apparent to me very quickly like wow, I haven't done this work yet, I need to get on it, I really need...I really...need to think about this. So, I would have conversations with people, when we met face-to-face and then I would have myself , like for example, driving home and thinking ...wow, so and

so kind of thinks this and so and so comes from this background and, how does my background and how does my experience really, fit into this? Or, I would find myself thinking, like, so and so said this when we met today and ...wow that's kind of scary and, what are my thoughts and why do I have these thoughts, so...

P9: Um, so, probably at the very beginning I had a lot of the like, oh no what am I doing here, this is not a great idea, um, that, some of that imposter syndrome...doubt, a lot of that going on. Because um, I hadn't taught before, I hadn't really supervised before and so I know other people in my cohort have and so I was thinking, oh wow, I'm like really behind, I don't really know anything about this.

### **Reflecting on Experience**

This category represents a few participants reflecting on various experiences, and interactions as a means of understanding their developing identity.

P3: because a, it, once you see like the struggles that a that counselors overall had to go through and then even today how there are counselors in the field that, you know, like a lot of counselors don't...want to research, they don't want to publish, uh, most of the counselors that I have ever interacted with over the past...how long have I been, eight years that I've been a counselor, have no interest in any of that. And I didn't either until I started, you know, with my school and reading about it and all and seeing like the value of all that and so many people now still do that and how it makes a difference to like when it comes to like laws changing and you know the...the way that the profession is going with like theories or something the there's influence everywhere with that.

I think...you know with what I was learning and what I was internalizing, you know like I said that I started taking more like pride in, like, the profession and myself and trying to, you know, look at different things like, you know conferences and (inaudible) and all that. I think that gave me, you know, a greater sense of, of confidence and all that, so I kind of...fell into those roles and encouraged it, versus not.

P5: I think her comment got me thinking in more along the lines of, oh I wonder what that's like because I always felt a bit different that most of my cohort mates, um, in terms of there weren't more than, I think maybe 1, 1 or 2 of us that were in just the focus of practice...

P7: so I can kind of keep pushing myself and kind of, continue reflecting. Um...I don't know, I'm, I'm proud of where I've gone so far but I feel like there is a lot of work to be done and I think I mentioned last time that we spoke that, if I ever get to a point where I don't feel like I need to continue...working, I, I think that's a problem (laughter). I think...counseling is kind of this constant self-improvement.

## Discussion

Through the initial round of interviews much was learned from each of the participants about how they experienced their professional identity development in a hybrid/blended doctoral CES program. Though each of the experiences were unique to the participants, several themes did emerge across most participants, either explicitly or implicitly, however the data gathered, only served to bring up further questions, and in some case digging deeper into the participants experiences is necessary to better understand the professional identity development process in a hybrid/blended program .

The second round of questions were derived through theoretical sampling. Based on what emerged and what was left unanswered. Several participants expressed having a type of “ah ha” moment during their program, meaning a moment or experience when they felt a shift, transition, or confidence with becoming a CES. It appeared that this happened while observing others perform tasks associated with being a CES, or when they were actually performing the tasks themselves. It would be interesting to ask all the participants if they had similar experience and what meaning it had for their identity development in their hybrid program. While connecting with others was a strong emerging category. It would be valuable to have participants reflect how these connections impacted their identity development and to have them provide examples of some of their more meaningful connections. Further the concepts of feedback and having outside experiences impacting professional identity in some way emerged, and while there was data to support these as part of the process, it would be important to flesh these ideas out more to see how significant they are to the identity development process. I suspect that they will be important in that there is limited face-to-face time, so feedback

might be even more important when received. Further, exploring experiences outside of the program may be important in that, the engagement in learning and interaction of the participants will, or had, occur(ed) mostly outside of their respective programs. And finally several participants cited personal characteristics that they had that they believed helped navigate their hybrid program successfully, thereby building their confidence as CES.

The following diagrams represent what emerged from the first round of interviews.

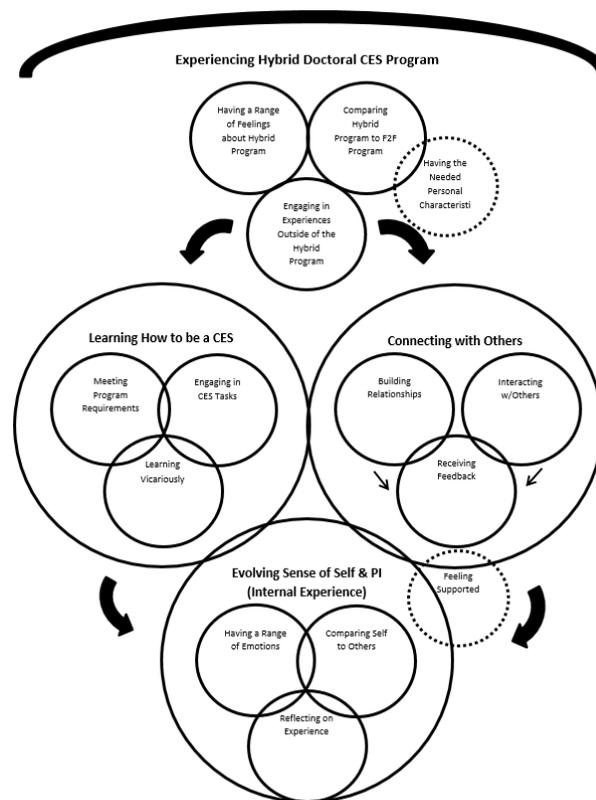


Figure 1. Emerging Categories and Properties From First Round of Interviews.

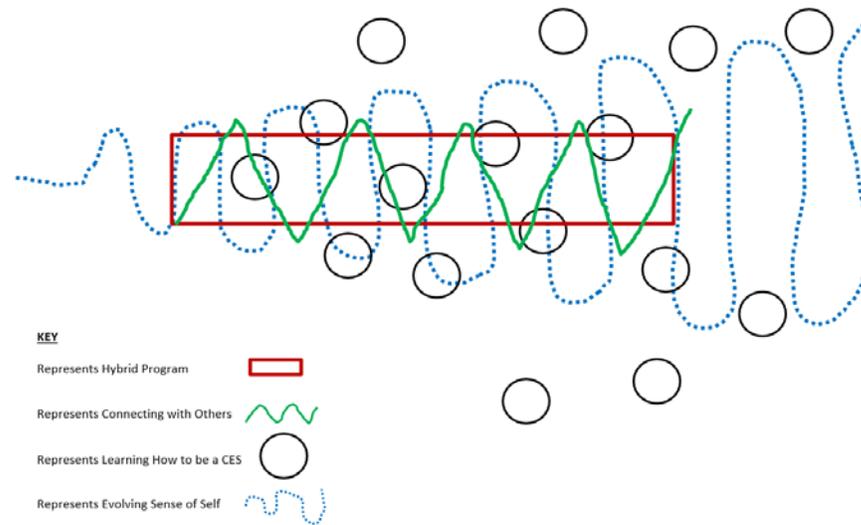


Figure 2. Emerging Identity Development Process From First Round of Interviews.

Based on the first round of interviews and engaging in theoretical sampling, the second round of questions are as follows:

1. Several participants expressed having an experience when they thought “I can do this” in reference to becoming a CES. Is this an experience you had? How did this experience develop and what did it mean for your PID?

2. Connecting with others (faculty, fellow students, and other professionals) emerged as a significant experience across participants; can you share how connecting with others affected your professional identity development? Walk me through the process of how connecting with others affected with your identity development by giving a specific example of an interaction or relationship you had.

3. Was feedback\*, either receiving it or giving it, a contributing factor in understanding or developing your professional identity in your hybrid program? How did this feedback impact your identity development? Can you provide a specific example?

\*Feedback means any type of input either within the program or outside of the program, formal or informal; it could also be verbal or nonverbal.

4. What, if any, personal characteristics did you use to help navigate your hybrid program. How did these/this characteristic(s) impact your identity development?

5. How did the outside experiences\* you had while in your hybrid program contribute to your overall professional identity development? How did you go about getting these opportunities? What was it like to have to seek these experiences? Can you give a specific example of seeking an outside experience and the impact it had on your professional identity development?

\*Outside experiences are defined as experiences outside of the actual classroom/course content; can include experiences related to program requirements such as internship or new experiences in the workplace or new professional opportunities, or any additional experiences sought by the participant to further their learning and development.

## **Appendix J**

### **Second Round of Interviews**

#### **Introduction**

The second round of interviews were conducted and were transcribed, de-identified and sent to the participants for review. Once participants reviewed transcripts coding of the data began.

Coding began by using the initial categories established from the first round of interviews as the framework/lens to analyze the new data. This was again a process of going line by line of each transcript. After taking the coded transcripts and reorganizing the data by major categories, I am trying to see if the data derived from the interviews still support the original categories and if I can now start of break the data down more to see the nuances between the properties and if relationships become more visible or if they have weakened in anyway.

Reviewing the data in terms of the second round questions, most of the questions proved to be quite fruitful. The Ah Ha experience question seemed to elicit information about growing confidence about getting through a Ph.D. program, more than it did about an evolving CES identity. However this question did flesh out a distinction between some of the participants. There seemed to be a few, maybe four participants, that did not really have this moment because they were already sure that they could be a CES going into the hybrid program, these participants claimed to not to have really have any doubts. At least three of these already had an established teaching/training and supervising career. Other participants were a little more mixed in their responses, a few participants that had little if

any teaching experience responded that getting the teaching experience, along with receiving feedback was important and that they discovered that they really enjoyed teaching. It appears that participants experience prior to entering the program may have a bearing on their professional identity development.

The question regarding what personal characteristics were important as they developed their professional identity in their respective hybrid program, had a variety of responses. Response ranged from having good technical skills to having good relationship building skills. Several participants talked about this idea of needing to be committed, about needing to be tenacious or persistence.

Other things that emerged from the data is the idea of having a mentor. Several participants explicitly cited having a mentor, others were more implicit with their comments. In fact most if not all of the participants cited one person impacting their identity development by being supportive and encouraging. A few participants also cited the importance of having a cohort, or a small group of fellow students that would provide support and encouragement. Two participants stated that they did not have a formal cohort, but formed one with other students for the needed support.

The following represents how the second round of data affects the existing categories, properties and emerging dimensions.

### **Connecting with Others**

Connecting with Others continued to represent the strongest category. It seems that overall, in developing ones profession identity it is critical that the person/participant connect with someone or a group of some kind. It seems that it is within the context of

connecting with others that the participants grew, both personally and professionally, were better able to understand their identity and the identity of the profession, were able to observe others, were able to try out new skills, and began the process of reflecting on their changing identity, and growing confidence. One question that always comes to mind and is really not the explicit purpose of the study, is how is this experience different from the experience of those in a traditional face-to-face program. I suspect there is a difference in that because there is limited face-to-face contact in a hybrid program, which would likely make connecting with others that much more important in a hybrid program.

Within this category the original properties changed. Building Relationships has changed to Having a Range of Relationships to encompass the variety of relationships from life-long to more fleeting such as networking. However, the property has remained strong. Most of the participants indicated having a significant relationship with a faculty member, and or a group of students that provided support and encouragement through the duration of the program and their identity development. Both the support and/or feedback from these individuals was important to the participants identity development. One thing that stood out was in the absence of an actual cohort, two of the participants formed their own informal cohort. Over half of the participants identified a specific person, faculty member, as the key to their support and the progression of their identity development. This property seems to naturally including the mentorship component, bonding with a cohort, either formal cohort or informal, and having relationships with others, either family, friends, or other individuals such as faculty, other students, or experts, that might not rise to a relationship as significant as a mentor.

The Property of Interacting with Others changed to Experiencing Different Types of Interactions. This change was done to ensure the inclusion of the different types of interactions participants experienced in their hybrid program as they developed their professional identity. The different types of interactions ranged from supportive to non-supportive or limited interactions. Through the coding process it was difficult to determine what to do with feeling supported, because it is a significant component of Connecting with Others. Participants indicated that they want to be reassured, they want to learn, they want feedback and it is through all of these things that a participant feels supported enough to move forward with becoming a CES and forming their own identity as such. This property, focusing on being supported, ultimately evolved in to the variety of interactions experienced by participants.

Additionally, emerging from the second round of data is that Receiving Feedback has gained more prominence, and it is not only connected with Connecting with Others, but almost equally tied to the other categories, Learning to be a CES and Evolving Sense of Professional Identity. Feedback has emerged as a bridge so to speak, joining all of the categories together. Feedback helps to build confidence when participants are engaging in new CES type tasks, and it also provides opportunities for participants to be self-reflective and they consider their changing identity. Within feedback there are several different types, positive, constructive and neutral, all of which are important to the identity development process.

### **Learning to be a CES**

After the second round of data collection, the category of Learning to be a CES was difficult to organize and justify the original properties, which were Meeting Program

Requirements, Engaging in CES Tasks, and Vicarious Learning. Vicarious Learning bounced between Learning to be a CES and Connecting with Others because while at its core it is about learning to be a CES, it is also very strongly tied to connecting or interacting with others. Ultimately Vicarious Learning stayed under Learning to be a CES, and much like Receiving Feedback serves as a bridge or link between Learning to be a CES and Connecting with Others.

After significant processing of the data supporting the two original categories of Meeting Program Requirements, Engaging in CES Tasks seemed to really represent conceptual learning vs. experiential learning. Therefore those two categories were revised and became Engaging in Conceptual Learning (Coursework) and Engaging in Experiential Learning (CES Tasks). Engaging in Conceptual Learning (Coursework) focuses on the various reading and assignments that a participant did while doing their coursework. A few participants mentioned how the coursework and assignments helped them to better understand what it was to be a CES, contemplating the meaning and application. A few participants expressed that it wasn't until later when they were either applying knowledge, or encounter a situation that made them think back to assignments and their relevancy. The other property, which has greater significance in the participants' PID experience was that of Engaging in Experiential Learning (CES Tasks). This had much greater significance in the PID experience of the participants. Participants expressed that being able to teach and getting feedback was big proponent of their growing confidence. Actually attending and presenting at conferences was important to learning how to be a CES and indoctrinating them into the professional community. Additional two participants express the importance of leadership in their evolving

changing identity. By far Engaging in Experiential Learning was the stronger of the two properties within Learning How to be a CES. Participants engaging in the various task associated with being a CES, teaching, supervising, presenting, scholarship, leadership, had experiences that shaped their changing identity. Inevitably this is tied to receiving feedback, and gaining confidence.

### **Evolving Sense of PI**

Analyzing the data from the second round of data collection, it was appropriate to change the category of Evolving Sense of Self & PI to Evolving Sense of Professional Identity (PI) and remove the word “self” to be more specific to the research being conducted. In the second round of data participants expressing having a range of emotions was strengthened. Participants expressed self- doubt, confusion, to growing confidence. There was not support that these emotions were cyclical or fluid but they were conveyed in a more linear manner. I suspect this might be due to the fact that over half of the participants have either graduated or are finishing up their dissertation, so most of the self-doubt they may have felt is in the past and maybe even a distant memory. Another thing of note, participants who seemed to have already engaged in teaching or supervising prior to entering the hybrid doctoral program seemed to have less self-doubt about their identity. This is likely because their identity was already forming as CES. They had already been validated about their capabilities, and they had already determined that becoming a CES was likely a good fit.

All of the properties within this category changed with the analysis of the second round of data. A property that has emerged in the second round of data is the idea of a Changing Identity. Participants share moments or experiences when they had a sense of

confidence that they were becoming a CES. Most of these occurred while in the midst, or shortly after engaging in CES tasks. Again, this also came after receiving feedback and validation. Again, this occurred mostly with the participants who did not already enter their hybrid program with substantial teaching and supervision experience. Some participants described moments, or several moments, or that it was ongoing and a process, even an unending process. Participants that did feel as though they could identify when they felt their identity change described in terms of hatching, turning, evolving and as a transition. An interesting thing, their changing identity was not always conveyed in total, meaning participants spoke about their changing identity in terms of what task they were doing or mastering, i.e. teaching, supervising, presenting, scholarship, or leadership. It is interesting that their identity was often talked about in singular aspects of the CES identity.

Reflecting on the Experience was folded into a new property of Changing Identity because the two are very tied to each other. While, one is clearly the act of changing and the other if reflecting on the change it was not enough to separate them out as separate properties. Having a Range of Feelings About the Process changed to Having feelings About the Process, to be more specific about how participants were feeling about the process of identity change. Comparing Self to Others, was eliminated as there did not seem to be enough support to make it as a property of its own. This might show up as dimension within the newly formed property of Changing Identity.

Further, significant time was spent understanding the relationship between the identified dimensions of each property to better understand how each dimension impacted other dimensions in other categories, specifically looking at how one end of a

dimension in one category affects another dimension in another category. In doing this the following theoretical questions were asked:

1. How does this concept relate to another?
2. What properties and dimensions of this category interact with the others?
3. What would happen if \_\_\_\_\_? (varying a property along its dimension)
4. How does time affect this concept and its relationship to others?
5. How does the 'big picture' affect this concept and its relationship to others?

After thoroughly analyzing the data from the second round of interviews, the following represents the emerging categories, properties, and dimensions and their subsequent definitions, including the supporting data from the two rounds of interviews conducted. Also provided is a description of the relationship between dimensions between properties.

### **Starting a Hybrid Doctoral CES Program (Context)**

The first category EXPERIENCING HYBRID DOCTORAL CES PROGRAM serves as the context for the process of professional identity development of the participants. It is because the participants are enrolled or have graduated from the hybrid program that has been the genesis of their experience of developing their professional identity as a CES. When sharing experiences about the hybrid program participants expressed having a range of emotions from feeling isolated, feeling frustrated, to feeling positive about the program and appreciative of its inherent flexibility. When expressing these feelings, comparisons were often made between the hybrid experience and their

perceptions of what a traditional face-to-face program would have been like. Further, all the participants entered their hybrid program with varying degrees of experience. All participants had counseling experiences and all held licenses in their respective States, but there were differences with experience in teaching, supervising, presenting, and leadership. These feelings and experiences were part of the identity development process in that they provided the general context for the professional identity development of each of the participants.

### **Comparing Hybrid Program to Perceptions of F2F Program**

As participants shared their experiences in the hybrid program most of them compared their experience to what they believed they would have experienced in a traditional, face-to-face, program. Many recognized that the online program offered them convenience that the F2F program did not. Additional comparisons centered around the perception of having less opportunity in the hybrid program for interaction with faculty, mentoring and for gaining CES experience such as teaching and supervising that is often available in a face-to-face format. This comparison also included many participants questioning the hybrid program and wondering if the hybrid program would be seen as less credible than a traditional program. Along with comparing participants expressed a range of feeling about the hybrid program. This range included having positive feelings about the convenience of it being online, feeling the learning content was good, and that the instructors were experienced and highly credentialed to more negative feelings about the lack of face-to-face interaction, feeling isolated, and feeling that there was limited experiential learning opportunities available within the program.

**Dimension: Appreciating convenience – feeling a sense of loss or lacking.** This dimension ranges from participants appreciating the convenience of being in a program that is online, where they can complete the course work at their convenience, day or night, and that they do not have to up root themselves and their family to pursue a doctoral degree. The convenience of not having to completely change your life, the ability to continue to work, have a family keep your friends was very much appreciated by most if not all of the participants. Participants frequently compared, or wondered, how being in a traditional doctoral program might be different. A few participants thought that there were fewer opportunities to connect with faculty in order to get mentor ship, as well as fewer opportunities to apply the information and practice the skills they were learning. It was mentioned by a few participants that in a traditional doctoral program there would be opportunities to teaching and supervise, conduct research and connect in general with faculty and peers. There was a sense of having lost those opportunities by electing to be in a hybrid program.

This dimension does not seem to impact any other property of dimension, in that it is a constant, meaning that these feelings did not seem to impact the participant's experiences.

P1 I1: I know all of my friends agree that we now question the hybrid platform, it works for us in terms of working, and having families and stuff, but I think it's across the board we think we would have had a different experience if we did a more traditional format, um, traditional being brick and mortar and maybe getting a little bit more... I still think that when you don't have that day to day contact it, you lose something, especially for this type of profession where its known for having that contact and being able to build cohesiveness, you know, with the people that you're working with...

P3 I1: I guess my experience has been a mixture of like good and bad...good just because, you know with a hybrid program it does give you a lot of opportunities

to, you know continue in school while you're working and all your other life stuff , you know, also it, it gives you all this information ... the bad thing is you now with...especially my school where most of it is on just like a Blackboard forum discussion kind of, you know...asynchronous kind of communication there's no face-to-face or anything.

P4 P1: Well, all of it's all online, except for the residency and the, class counseling, a, internships. So, I was able to...make friends online with people ...and connect and call each other and talk about assignments and...which I found, online was easier to do, then when you're in a traditional setting. In the traditional setting, everybody has their own...little friendships and stuff. So, it's not fun to break into...meeting other people, I would say I mean you meet them cause you're in class with them... but online you know, you can call-em up and talk and you talk about the assignments and you brainstorm and, and I, and I liked that, it was a great experience.

P5 I1: so in this it was oh this is a great program I don't have to, you know, move away across the country, I don't have upheave my husband, and my life ...

P5 I1: Well it's so diff, it, it's, without a frame of reference, I mean, you, you know it felt very different than what I would image a land based, um, Ph.D. process would have been like...Yeah, and was that really supposed to be part of, or did they just forget that piece, or um, you know, what would it have been like to have been in a Ph.D. program with only 5 people in the cohort and these warm fuzzy faculty member that you could pop in and visit and you know...

P6 I1: the online environment creates, you know you become, again good writers and good scholarship but, the lack of emotional interaction, the lack of collegial sort of ah...I'm just bantering, just being in the physical presence of, somebody I think has been the greatest hindrance because you can't...

P7 I1: I think that there is a certain expectation that goes with entering a doctoral program and I think , um, given the nature of online learning and hybrid learning and maybe kind of the historical stigma surrounding the same, I think that there is kind of this implicit...um, fear that other people will not take our degrees as seriously or...will not back them

P9I1: I think some of it is not being able to practice everything , so like I know in ah, more traditional program we would have access to, like the masters students or other undergrad courses that we could be teaching, just more opportunities to be doing the work already. I think not being on the, a, campus and access to stuff like that...

### **Identifying a Professional Identity Prior to Starting Hybrid Program**

Participants entered their respective hybrid programs with varying descriptions of what their professional identity was. This variation included not having an established

professional identity to having a singular identity such as a counselor, clinician, school counselor or addictions counselor, to having a CES professional identity already starting to form based on previous doctoral work, participants had either no teaching or supervising experience, a few had some supervision experience, but no teaching, and some participants had significant teaching and supervision.

**Dimension: Having no identity – having the beginnings of a CES identity.**

Participants had a wide range in this particular property. One participant stated that she did not think she had much of an identity when she started the program because her Masters program did not emphasize it. However this same participant also had a lot of teaching and supervising experience under her belt. Most of the participants stated that their identity was singular, meaning a counselor, a clinician, a school counselor or an addictions counselor. Very little elaboration was given, other than the type of population they may have served and a few mentioned their theoretical orientation, but in general the identity described was very singular. One participant had been in a previous doctoral program and had a lot of teaching and supervising, so as he described his identity, it sounded as if he had already started forming a CES identity prior to starting the program.

This dimension interacts with several other dimensions. The first property it impacts is Having Feelings about the Process. Those coming into the program that had little identity and/or little to no experience at engaging in CES type tasks, specifically teaching and supervising, seemed to have less confidence and felt like an imposter. It seemed progressively the more experience a participant had previously with either teaching, supervising or previous doctoral work, the more confidence they seemed to

have. Further it seemed that it was in the areas that there was no experience that the participant's experiences the most anxiety about.

This dimension also impacted the dimension of Changing Identity in that participants described their changes often times in terms of the tasks or roles that they were fulfilling, for example if they were teaching then their teaching identity was changing. However if a participant already had teaching experience, less emphasis would be placed on teaching because that identity was already forming, and emphasis would be placed in an area that was not as developed such as research.

This dimension also impacted Receiving Feedback, in that if a participant already had the confidence in one aspect of being a CES, or if they had prior experience in a CES Task, receiving feedback was less important to the process. If they had no experience then feedback was more important.

Again this dimension impacted Learning How to be a CES, specifically with Engaging in Experiential Learning and Vicarious Learning, the more evolved the participants identity was toward CES tasks the less important those same tasks were in performing or observing.

P1 I1: I would uh identify my professional identity before as, as a counselor, uh not a counselor educator, but just as a counselor, uh as a counselor, even with supervision responsibilities, but um I identified as a counselor.

P2 I1: Before entering my, um doctoral program, my professional identity, uh, was Rogerian in nature and very humanistic, um, very person centered, very student centered, supervisee centered, uh so, I work with what the client brings me,

P3 I1: before my doctoral program, I think that I pretty much just aligned myself with just, being like a substance abuse counselor, cause that's where all my, you

know like previous training was, so I kinda, um, like thought of myself as just a counselor nothing more nothing less.

P4 I1: my professional identity before entering the Ph.D. program, was um...kind of mixed... and got my Masters degree in 2000 and I got licensed as a therapist in 2003 and then I went into private practice in, like, 2005.

P5 I1: A clinician..., very much a practicing clinician private practice with dual licensure wanting to work more in, a forensic, world... Working with individuals, couples and families, um, oh this, ah, this is hard, doing, you know doing counseling but none of the, other pieces of...identity that I now hold.

P6 I1: I had a previous doc program that, um, that I went through was all, wh, I just didn't finish my dissertation, um, so that kind of added to my counselor id , my professional identity as a counselor and then I've also really enjoyed presenting and teaching in a Masters counseling programs... I was identifying primarily with a counselor and I, and I even teach as a counselor who likes to teach, not as a counselor educator...

P6 I2: because I taught for four or five years prior to my first Doc program, thinking that maybe I'll pursue a Doc, a CES degree, but not having definitive plans, I started teaching and supervising well before that.

P7 I1: I don't think I had much of a professional identity before joining the program. Um, I worked in community mental health and my attitude was really kind of, adjust to whatever my client's needs were, um, so I never spent a lot of time engaging in a lot of self-reflection regarding my professional identity.

P7 I2: I was already a very active clinical supervisor before I entered the program...

P8 I1: my counselor identity would have been as a school counselor, particularly as an elementary school counselor.

P9 I1: so I think before I started the doc. program, my identity was very much, just a counselor. So, I hadn't done any supervision, I had really never taught anything, any training that I had done was, you know, pretty like, on a peer level. Um, so I would say it was much more that like a children's counselor and really no identity as far as the other kind of roles that I've taken on since then

### **Evolving Sense of Professional Identity (Internal Experience)**

From the beginning and throughout the program participants expressed varying degrees of the development with their professional identity as a CES. There were many factors that contributed to the participants EVOLVING SENSE OF PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY as a CES. One factor seems to be how they perceived their identity when

they started the program. Those participants who did not have a strong sense of their identity, or did not have experience with engaging in CES tasks, such as teaching and supervising, prior to entering the program, seemed to experience more self-doubt and angst at the beginning of the program and as their identity developed. Those participants who had prior experience seemed to be more confident when engaging in those specific CES tasks and seemed to more easily include those aspects of being a CES in their evolving identity. When engaging in new CES tasks, receiving some type of feedback was critical in moving the participant along in the identity development. Receiving feedback from others, formal or informal and positive or constructive, helped participants gauge their progress and built their confidence as they continued evolving their CES identity. Evolving Sense of Professional Identity is very interrelated with the categories of Learning How to be a CES and Connecting with Others.

### **Having a Range of Feelings as Professional Identity Develops**

The range of emotions that participants expressed as their identity, or aspects of their identity changed, included feeling like an imposter, feelings of self-doubt, anxiety, frustration, nervousness, confusion, hopefulness, confidence, and a feeling of “I can do this”. These evolving feelings were mostly tied to new CES tasks that participants did not have a lot or any experience with before starting the program. Again, emotions varied from participant to participant depending on if the CES tasks were new to the participant, or if they had already established a level confidence with those tasks prior to entering the program. Feelings became increasingly more positive as experience was gained and feedback was received.

**Dimension: Feeling like an “imposter” - feeling like “I can do this” or feeling confident.** This dimension represents the various feeling a participant shared they had as they started their program and their identity was changing they had a range of feelings from feeling like an imposter, as well as feelings of anxiety and self-doubt. As participants gained more experience and interacted with others anxiety and self- doubt became less and confidence grew.

The range of this dimension does impact the dimension of Changing Identity, in that if a participant feels like an imposter, they have less confidence, and therefor may experience a greater degree of PID with their CES identity. Those that have a little more confidence with their evolving identity may not have as steep of a growth curve with their identity development.

Interestingly, this dimension is impacted by more dimensions than it actually impacts. The dimensions that impact this dimension are feedback that either helps with confidence or feedback that hinders confidence.

P1 I1: I remember really feeling inept, um and, and, and unprepared to teach and um but I also remember getting to that point where I felt like, okay I can do this, its, its not as hard as I , I need to not be so hard on myself...I feel very comfortable with it now, but I remember not being comfortable with it...

P1 I2: and it just kind of was a very assuring place to be in, that it was feasible um, I was capable, that maybe some of the anxieties that were lurking were good anxieties as opposed to bad anxieties that they could be motivators and not something that could be a detriment, um, so it was, I actually remember thinking, “I can do this, I can really do this”...

P2 I1: So, they in, they inspect, put the seal on what I truly believe is me. So that was my biggest experience as teacher and receiving so many positive feedback from the Master, ah, professors. They says you are awesome, you’re a natural, ah, all those who have observed my teaching gave me the same the same feed-back,

of course. Nervousness was, they are present all the time, I was shaking throughout, ah but I let, I let me to come out, rather than focus on the observation piece...I just forgot about that and I allowed me to come out. And as the professors were putting a seal on it, it more comfort, ah, the more, more comfortable I became.

P5 I2: with my advisor, and she was my instructor at the time, I think she was a little nervous of how much self-questioning I was doing during that internship process where I launched into teaching a class and, um, I was pretty hard on myself, I was pretty scared and I think she was pleasantly surprised then when I did bring a video to the supervisor's office that I wasn't as bad as I was making myself out to be, I think and in fact, um, maybe okay at it

P6 I2: but got me through that self-doubt and those moments where it's like "oh jeez, is this worth it, I got so many other things I want to do?" So, um, it just helped me, those characteristics just pushed me through to get to this point.

P7 I1: P7: Well if I wanted to be really honest with you, I think at first there was a little bit intimidation, um, and it was kind of like, oh crap, that this is, this is a core component of counseling and...I'm already a licensed counselor and, and I'm, I haven't done this work. So I feel, you know, at first it was...sheer intimidation and it wasn't the panic and maybe not even a little bit of frustration that I was able to get as far as I did professionally without, doing what is probably very, very foundational work. Um, and then after that kind of initial...um, intimidation and panic wore off, I think I became kind of almost invigorated, like really excited to kind of engage in the work and I realized that, um, I was in an environment where I had the ability and the tools to kind of engage in it; so I felt pretty motivated.

P7 I1: I am kind of embarrassed by this, but I think other people in their past academic experiences, for example in their masters program, had really been pushed to reflect on this...professional identity, much harder than I had and I think there was this kind of...um...maybe unconscious motivation where I felt, not necessarily inferior to my peers, but it was very apparent to me very quickly like wow, I haven't done this work yet, I need to get on it...

P7 I2: And so, I would say that experience, that expectation to have to do some research and have to be very involved in my professional community was both really terrifying and both really exhilarating. I was scared because kind of going back to that whole idea of the imposter syndrome that we talked about last time, and like when am I ever going to get published, am I okay, can I get through this. There was that fear. And then there was this excitement that went with, wow, I get to study stuff that I want to, because I want to, in the manner that I want to.

P8 I2: And I think some of the confusion there with my own identity is, I truly was still a student. You know, those people that were in the front of my class, still were the ones that were in charge, they were the instructors and it took a while to get up to the point where I felt okay, I'm almost their equal.

P9 I1: like at the beginning there were a lot of feelings of self-doubt , um, anxiety , um, just some negativity and then, throughout the course of it there's, there has been some hopefulness, because if it was all like, oh I can't do this then I wouldn't still be here I don't think.

P9 I1: Um, so, probably at the very beginning I had a lot of the like, oh no what am I doing here, this is not a great idea, um, that, some of that imposter syndrome...doubt, a lot of that going on. Because um, I hadn't taught before, I hadn't really supervised before and so I know other people in my cohort have and so I was thinking, oh wow, I'm like really behind, I don't really know anything about this.

P9 I1: Now I really do feel a lot more competent about it . Cause like I'm about to be done with my second year and done with the course work, um...and about to be doing it. And so I feel really hopeful and really confident about it. I think there is still some hesitations, some anxiety, some doubt and I think that doubt comes and goes now a little bit more than it did before...but...

### **Changing Identity**

Most to the participants describe a moment or a series of experiences when they could sense their identity changing. Words used to describe this change in identity were hatching, turning, evolving and as a transition. These moments or experiences often occurred in conjunction with engaging in a CES tasks. Often feedback from others, either formal or informal assisted with increasing confidence and fostering identity development as a CES. When talking about identity changes, participants often focused on one aspect of their identity, such as teaching, supervising, leadership or scholarship. The changes with individual aspects of CES identity tended to be related to tasks that the participant had little to no experience with prior to entering their hybrid and were now engaging in as part of their program and identity development.

**Dimension: Experiencing small (aspect) changes – experiencing significant (total) changes.** This property represents the participants changing identity. Participants expressed their identity changing in a variety of different ways. Participants expressed their teaching, supervising, leadership, or research identity changing as they engaged in tasks related to these various roles associated with being a CES. When speaking about these aspect or role changes these were considered smaller changes in the total identity development. These small changes that occurred as parts of the identity were evolving were again often associated with experiential learning and receiving feedback in some form, either direct, formal or informal and less direct. Participants also communicated that they sensed that their overall identity was changing. It also appears that participants who had some experience in taking on CES roles such as teaching and supervising had less dramatic changes in their professional identity development because they were already taking on some of these roles.

This particular dimension does not directly impact other dimensions in other properties, but is impacted by the participants evolving feelings about the process and the identity and experience the participant had prior to entering the hybrid program.

P3 I1: I think...you know with what I was learning and what I was internalizing , you know like I said that I started taking more like pride in, like, the profession and myself and trying to , you know, look at different things like, you know conferences and (inaudible) and all that . I think that gave me, you know, a greater sense of, of confidence and all that, so I kind of...fell into those roles and encouraged it, versus not.

P3 I1: and I started identifying with that like mentor kind of like educator or supervisor I not even quite sure, because I wasn't technically their supervisor and I technically was not like their boss or anything but...you know I became more that mentor role and people just kept coming to me and asking me questions and you know running things by me like program changes or, hey, can you, you know,

look over this new group and, um, that I'm gonna start and, you know, just evaluate for me and I found like myself falling into a lot more of those kind of roles on the outside, that later on I could tie in...you know, as I was like, progressing and I guess my identity was changing that I could tie into in-school stuff that I ran into later on, and it helps my, you know, like make all the things click together.

P3 I2: It was definitely like that whole experience shaped, you know, my professional side which was like a very big learning experience for me. And then also in my student, I guess persona, it really made me kind of shift and see how different professors do different things and you know teach different classes and approach different topics and you know really ran a classroom...

P3 I2: Yea, exactly, it was really intense and also, it made me even consider, you know I was more interested in supervision side of what the Ph.D. program and my future and this kind of, you know, opened my up to the possibility of using the educator side and maybe pursuing that aspect, you know, maybe becoming a faculty member somewhere or an adjunct or something.

P3 I2: So there was like a bunch of like little policies that was like going and being up for vote when I was just a regular member and I agreed with some of them and I didn't agree with others and I said to myself, "how can I kind of really manipulate this situation where I can have more of an influence over what policies are being made and all that." And I was like "I know, I could be secretary," because that was the only position I felt comfortable with at that time, like oh you know it's not too much of a leadership role but still it is a leadership role and I'll be, you know, part, one of five members that is able to really, you know, influence the entire organization.

P5 I2: But the counselor educator, as far as teaching, really didn't happen for me until I knew I needed to do that as a component of my internship site, my internship process and I taught a class and I loved it and so, if I hadn't had that experience of, we have this internship and at least fifty hours of it has to be teaching, I'm not sure that I would have gotten to this place that I'm at now.

P5 I2: Well the supervisory role was a fairly comfortable transition for me because I had actually taken a break after I volunteered, um, after I finished my internship and so I hadn't been part the agency for I think a couple of years and yet I knew everybody and they were very welcoming and so like I felt like I slipped pretty easily into the role of taking on a couple of individual supervisees and, um, then co-leading a group supervision process, again with a trusted colleague. And so that transition for me was fairly effortless and felt very natural.

P5 I2: Well it was pivotal in that I had not even thought of myself as necessarily a counselor educator, ah...supervisor, yes, but not a counselor educator, nor had I even considered looking for a job as either an adjunct or a fulltime professor anywhere. So that piece of my professional identity was newly hatched with the prospect of having to force myself to teach

P6 I2: Again, I don't think it was a definitive moment of "I can do it," it was more in my mind, it was like, "I really like this" and it's fairly compatible with, you know, who I identify myself as.

P7 I1: so I can kind of keep pushing myself and kind of, continue reflecting. Um...I don't know, I'm, I'm proud of where I've gone so far but I feel like there is a lot of work to be done and I think I mentioned last time that we spoke that, if I ever get to a point where I don't feel like I need to continue...working, I, I think that's a problem (laughter). I think...counseling is kind of this constant self-improvement.

P7 I2: I think once I realized that there were so many commonalities, I just became more confident in what I already kind of knew instinctually, from my own experience and from my education as well. Um, and then instead of worrying about what I might not know, I started kind of, um, put my energy towards the stuff that I was already really passionate about because ...built my identity around that a little bit more and allowed myself that space, which I was afraid to do before.

P7 I1: my thoughts regarding counseling and counselor education in general are much more developed that they were, you know, three or four years ago. I, I think I'm very much in the process of still learning though, um ...I find myself kind of craving interactions with other professionals...

P7 I2: So, um, during the program I made kind of a couple of really interesting professional changes that were kind, of a long time coming, but. When I first applied for the program I was running a clinic and during the time that I was in the program I actually left my clinic and went to teaching fulltime and then it transitioned from a fulltime teaching position to a tenured track position.

P8 I2: But I definitely remember that oh yeah, okay...because for a while I was very much the student, you know like I've always been, in classes and learning and yes I wanted to be the person who was teaching and guiding other people and all that and at some point it was like "yeah okay, I'm going to transition over I can see myself doing it now.

P8 I2: for my whole life at various points I've been a student. I've got that part down pat, you sit in a desk and you listen and you do what they tell you and turn in the assignments. But, um, then it was like, oh okay, then I'm going to be the one who is helping other people learning to be counselors and, um, I have the, I will have the ability to do that. I'm learning...I have learned the things that I need to do to equip other people to do this. It was, like I said, exciting and confidence building and sort of a turn if you will, it was like okay, yes!

P8 I2: And I remember prior to that, thinking how do you ever get to the point where you do feel like you have the expertise and the ability to be able to teach other people, you know, I guess, in a formal kind of way. We are all teaching each other all the time, but, you know in a formal way, enough that somebody would hire me to do that, that I would feel confident and comfortable doing that. And then like I said, at some point and I wish that I could tell you what it was that happened, maybe it was just a process?

P8 I1: Um, probably as I started working with masters level students, um, in teaching, as I was doing my internship I was teaching some classes, so I was in a different position, than I had been before. And then, as I worked directly in a supervisory role with the masters level school counseling students, um...I felt more ah, more like a counselor educator than a school counselor... it became more real I suppose is, is what it was. It wasn't just, I was reading about, again, more counseling stuff or thinking ok, there's my professor up there in the front of the class and...you know, that's, he's teaching me and I'm learning from him, but all of a sudden it was like, wow I can do that too...

P9 I2: And so when my supervisees have a success or they get a certain concept all of a sudden or they make a breakthrough with a case using an intervention that I showed them awhile back, I feel like "oh, maybe what I am doing is working."

### **Connecting with Others (Central Category)**

CONNECTING WITH OTHERS is defined as having some sort of face-to-face interaction with others emerged as a significant theme or category. Connecting encompassed everything from forming long term relationships and maintaining relationships to interacting in an informal way such as with networking. Consistently participants cited that making connections, interacting and having relationships with others gave rise to feeling supported and in turn were critical experiences to their identity

development. Some participants also cited that connecting with others was a way of putting their experiences into context and stating that it made their experiences more “real”. It was also expressed that the absence of interacting, not being able to connect, and/or having negative interactions was considered a hindrance to identity development. As part of connecting with others, receiving feedback was an important aspect. Feedback received was either formal given by faculty, other professionals or peers about performance or progress, or informal such as attending a conferencing and feeling welcomed by others. Feedback, both positive and constructive helped participants gain confidence, which impacted their identity development.

### **Having a Range of Relationships**

A key component to the identity development was forming significant, more long term relationships with faculty/mentors and fellow students, or having established less significant, but still influential, relationships with other professionals, fellow students, or family and friends. The type of relationships that emerged as being significant were those that were described as mentor relationships. Several participants both explicitly and implicitly described having a mentor, or somebody that they go to that was a role model and a person to go to with questions, concerns, or ideas about their professional identity development. Having access to a mentor or a mentor type person to share frustrations, milestones and to get advice from were critical to identity development. Having access to a mentor or a significant relationship was important the participant’s overall identity development. Another significant relationship that was described was relationships with cohort members. Relationships with peers, or fellow students gave participants the opportunity to share their current experiences with those who are having the same

experiences, i.e. enrolled in a hybrid doctoral program. Having relationships with peers allowed for comparison of the participant's progress and also opened up the participant's understanding of the diversity within the counseling profession itself. Additionally, these relationships also contributed to the participant's feeling supported and belonging to a larger community. In the absence of a formal cohort, a few participants formed informal cohorts that lent support to each other throughout the program. One participant expressed that with the support of his informal cohort, they were able to present at several conferences, assist with chapter writing and get an article published, accomplishments that would not have been able to do on his own. These accomplishments with his informal cohort strengthened his PID. These significant relationships were established, valued and likely more long term. Other relationships were also deemed as significant to the participants overall identity development were relationships with family and friends, whose support allowed for the pursuit of their doctoral hybrid program. Additionally, participants cited just the interaction with others, either during face-to-face class time, at conferences, or in other professional setting were necessary and beneficial to their professional identity development. These interactions led to feelings of belonging, helped to normalize their experiences, put their experiences in to context and made what they were doing feel more "real".

**Dimension: Forming life-long relationships – having less significant, but influential interactions.** This dimension encapsulates the range of relationships a participant expressed having while in the hybrid program. This range in relationships included very significant and impactful relationship that participants could count on for support, encouragement, and feedback. These relationships were typically described as

mentor type roles, or relationships with peers or several peers in a cohort, and in some cases forming an informal cohort. Other relationships proved to be significant to the participants even if there were not as significant. These relationships were family and friends who were supportive and friendships that were formed during the hybrid process. These friendships might not be life long, but they serve a purpose while in the program in that they give participants someone to ask questions of, commiserate, and normalize their experience. These friendships can be with faculty or other students. Then there are interactions that may not lead to a relationship, but occur mostly in large group scenarios such as attending conferences, and residencies. These interactions gave participants a sense of belonging.

This is an important dimension and it seems to reciprocally impact Helping Confidence – Hindering Confidence (Receiving Feedback) in that the more significant the relationship, the more the person might value the feedback, and the more helping the feedback is, might impact the strength of the relationship, just as less significant relationships, or interactions the feedback might not be weighed as heavily by the participant, and if the feedback is considered hindering in any way the relationship may weaken.

P1 I1: I, I can kind of walk through how I felt in different phases of the process uh, and how that worked for me and how I had to kinda embrace it and part of it was getting a mentor um, to, to kinda bounce stuff off of and to be, to develop a relationship with, that could help me, and I believe that I needed that because I was in the program I was in...

P1 I2: I've ah I call on her when I am frustrated and feel like I don't want to do this anymore um I call on her when I have reached a major milestone or progress to let her know that it is moving forward. That relationship has proved to be invaluable, um, and it, its, she's one of the ones who said promise me, you'll,

you'll finish, promise me that, you have a lot to offer your work with the students is, you know fabulous...

P2 I1: but when I had my first residency that was shortly after I started the program...those fears disappear and this a community and not only a community, this is, ahh, an opportunity that I had have to, to meet with people in Japan, in Korea, Africa, the Islands, Hawaii, you name it, I have met people from all over the world ...who are going through the same program that I am going, who have been to my classes, who seek me in the organization e-mails...

P2 I2: What jumps into my mind right now was an experience that I had when I went to the conference for the XXXX. I got to meet a few colleagues that came from all over the United States. I was presenting an hour and a half didactic presentation for gambling addiction. Ah, there I was not aware that one of the top leaders of gambling addiction treatment was sitting in my audience.

P3 I1: Because, like okay, where I was, or where I still am...there's no one around me that is going through the same experience... so it's very like isolating knowing that like, ok I'm a Ph.D. student in counselor education and supervision I'm going through all these you know classes, going through all this process, going through a these internal changes, you know, ideological changes, counseling changes, classes changes and , no one around me that I can have a conversation with really understands...or identifies with what I'm going through...no matter what.

P3 I1: I think the residencies were one of the best things of the entire program. Because it, you know, it's the opposite of what I was saying, you're thrown in with, you know, twenty, thirty, a hundred, two hundred people all going through that same experience and all with, you know the same, um goals in mind and going through the same stuff. So that was one of the best experiences from the program.

P3 I2: And she still emails me now like "How's your prospectus going you want me to review it for you?"... "Are you having any problems with researching, any questions?" She gives me her like Skype information and that's not really her realm at all she's in charge of the program not in the fine details of my dissertation journey.

P3 I2: I don't know how to describe it, it kind of, like to me Ph.D.s and like Doctors were so like kind of on another level of existence. Yea, there kind of like, I felt like they were very far removed from like a counselor or a therapist, you know they were kind of like an academic person at the top level. But then when I started hanging out with them I they like mentoring me on a couple of things

during the residency and all that, it really made me feel that like I was just like them, but like they shared all of their counseling experiences and it was the same kind of stuff that I was going through, still.

P4 I1: I would say the experiences...that um...were most, most helpful, definitely would be the residencies that I attended. They were helpful because you got to meet people and you got to learn about ...you know you got to meet the professors , you got to learn about the school you got to really connect with them and, and...understand the missions and the goals of the program.

P4 I2: Because when you're doing online, you really do need to have somebody that you can call and talk to things about... processing instructions, figuring out what the instructor is asking for, you know... Well, by connecting with other Ph.D. students, it helps to keep you focused and not make you feel like you're doing it all by yourself... Um, and getting to know their life stories and stuff is just very helpful in regards to figuring out what your identity is.

P4 I2: Um, I would say that at different trainings and seminars and conferences that I've gone to, when I talk about being in the Ph.D. program, the encouragement and the connection that you make with people was beneficial in building my personal identity.

P5 I1: the exposure to a really diverse group of individuals , um, in my cohort, um, a representative of different professions and yet still desiring to be counselor educators , ah, was a really rich experience for me, just their varied backgrounds, watching how their minds worked , um, just their interactions and like I was saying, the support, particularly when I was stretched to my max during comps, um, the, the camaraderie, the, the sense of belonging, the connection was huge

P5 I2: on a personal level, I felt really connected to several of the people in the cohort and as a result of that I felt connected then across the country at different institutions or different places of employment or different realms, like school counseling, that I could not even imagine having before I entered in the program. And so it provided for me this network of colleagues again on a national level that I never could have imagined going into the program and, potentially, lifelong connections and, so specifically...connections, that one, well I think I moved from being a fairly isolated private practitioner to being a part of a world that I knew nothing about.

P5 I2: And then, you know, really when it came down to, how do I teach this class, it didn't come from direct, you know, input from the professors in the program, it came from talking to colleagues and you know; if you were teaching this class what resources would you use, or could I take a look at this, you know,

one of your old syllabi, or did you know there is a clearing house for syllabi on the internet. You know, those kinds of things and, um, just being exposed to the body of knowledge that's out there via colleagues through connecting with them and asking

P6 I1: I would say helped has been, the residencies, um, the the level to which we interact with colleagues and faculty is, is just unparalleled. So I think that has helped because I form, you form very intimate relationships with, with your fellow students and your colleagues, because you know, you're nine days, trapped in a hotel room and...and ah, and it's pretty intense, and and, I think not only those interactions but interacting with some really cool people and, really smart, intelligent and experienced people, I think that is as elemental as the interaction, the intimate for the lack of a better word, interaction with my colleagues and my faculty, during the residencies has probably been, been the most important.

P6 I1: online environment creates, you know you become, again good writers and good scholarship but, the lack of emotional interaction, the lack of collegial sort of ah...I'm just bantering, just being in the physical presence of, somebody I think has been the greatest hindrance because you can't, I mean we're all counselors we're all, counselors we're all counselor educators, I mean, want to be counselor educators, we're all relatively touchy-and-feely people, we like to see interaction we like to see, facial expressions we like to hear the tone of our voice we like to, you know rely upon the support from others...

P6 I1: it was a challenge, it wasn't, it wasn't impossible I think I did pretty good at developing some really strong friendships, that then turned into a variety of, of presentations I think I have presented with my, colleagues that I met in the, my second residency. I presented with them, three or four times at, at state and a regional and, and at, ah, the national conference with the ACA so, I would say it was a challenge that's hit the moderate difficulty, it takes effort it doesn't happen easily like it would if you were, seeing each other every week, um but between phone calls and Skype and face time and then all the opportunities that are out there...um, it's possible it's, it's, I don't know, it's moderately challenging it's not easy.

P6 I2: Early on in XXXX's program there wasn't a formal mentorship program, I think they have it now but I was in one of the first groups to come through. They, I did and she was the chair of my Doc program, um, because in residencies two and three a CES student is paired with a Masters or Doc faculty to be a teaching assistant and to teach, it's coupled with the Masters and Masters in Counseling, residencies. So CES students with their faculty mentor teach and present to

Masters students... So, it wasn't a formal mentorship program, but I established that mentor early on in residency two and I've presented with her...

P6 I2: The second two residencies is when I really established face-to-face contact, we formed a, sort of a, not a formal cohort, but an informal cohort ... and I sort of rode that out to this point. So I want to say it's probably vital to my, to a lot of my professional presentations, it's been vital to actually my dissertation topic and it's been vital to just hanging in there and, you know grinding out a Doc program like you have to do.

P7 I1: I think that the experiences that helped me the most were actually kind of the downtime experiences that I had with my cohort, where we weren't necessarily engaging in a particular assignment or class discussion, but really kind of had more of a free flowed discussion and we were just able to kind of...build a deep rapport and trust and have discussions regarding professional identity in which we didn't feel we had to relate everything back to the theory of the week, or whatever.

P7: For me, it really came down, I think where we talked about, um, my lunches with my cohort members when we were meeting. Just in a lot of conversations about how different our professional experiences were and how different are professional environments were, were really striking to me , but, and the fact that, despite the fact that some of us worked in community mental health and some of us worked in a private practice and some of us worked in school counseling, we really had, um, very similar structures and very similar , um, concerns for clients, even though our clients were so variable and yet had very similar concerns regarding our pursuits in higher education and licensure and professional identity in general

P8 I1: I became, I guess again, that sort of the process of beginning to identify more with the counselor educator folks , beginning to talk to them a little but in a different way about what they were doing and about what I could do and a confidence builder, again.

P8 I2: and I just remember she helped me feel so confident. I could send her an e-mail question, I even picked up the phone a few times and called her and just cause I needed to talk and needed somebody to say "you're going make it, it's going to be okay, were going to get through this."... but she supported me through that...she cared to listen and helped me to know that what I was doing was important to her. That relationship is one that I will remember always.

P8 I2: So the four of us, um, Skyped, I think is the way we met, um, for several weeks and answered this ethical dilemma and wrote a paper together, sent it, you

know, back and forth by e-mail . And it truly surprised me and amazed me what a bonding experience that was, like I said, they became my base as we moved through all the different points... But, you know, we all went through this together and supported each other and other classes, you know...

P8 I2: I think the people, the connections that you're talking about, made it all real. You know, you read things in the textbook or online or whatever and yea, okay I get the facts, whatever, but the interactions with other people made what I wanted to do seem real.

P8 I2: I saw other people who were counselor educators and they've been there all the time, but I never really thought much about them. I thought everybody was just a counselor, a practicing counselor like me, but, as I went more and more through my program I started realizing "oh, there's a lot of these people who are counselor educators who have probably been counselor educators for a long time,

P9 I1: the face-to-face meetings have been really helpful , um...you know some of the distance piece or the online piece is like, not feeling as connected and um , not having as much access immediately to...um, the professors and that kind of thing . They're super accessible via like e-mail and all that stuff but it's just really nice just to be able to have a face-to-face conversation where things bounce back-n-forth in the moment. Um, so being able to be face-to-face, or having access to my advisor, like via phone or Adobe Connect instead of e-mail has been really helpful. Um, I also think, a lot of the...like interactions that we have between cohort members, so us commenting on each other's work, sharing experience, that kind of thing; whether it's face-to-face or online, it's been really helpful.

P9 I2: one is of course my advisor, so I spend a lot of time talking with him and not just about the program but about what it's like to be a Counselor Educator and Supervisor on a larger sense and what a career looks like and some of the really wonderful things about that and some of the really stressful things about that that, you know, I'm going to have to think about as I go forward. So that's been nice to have someone that is way far ahead of me in their career that can kind of guide me through that.

P9 I2: And so talking to other people, whether they're in the same situation as me as a Doc. student or they're further along in their career, helps me to put it into context.

P9 I2: So, yea I know I talked about going to conferences or talking with other professionals like outside of the program, but those have been really helpful to take it out, because the program kind of creates a little bubble and I can put the blinders on to get through it and that kind of thing. But, I have to step back and

realize that it has a purpose and that there's a place for this information to go because there's a bigger vision for what I am doing

### **Experiencing Different Types of Interactions**

Experiencing different types of interactions emerged as a property and encompassed having positive interactions in which the participants felt supported to negative or limited interaction in which the participants did not feel supported. Experiencing positive interactions with others also led to feelings of being validated, encouraged and provided a sense of belonging. These feelings were expressed in various ways by all of the participants. Support from various people, and different types of relationships, led to participants growing confidence in their new role as a CES, which ultimately aided in their identity development. Positive interactions with others in the counseling community, whether it was at professional conferences or in a work environment, led to participants feeling that they were being perceived as CESs, which in turn aided in their identity development. Again, these positive interactions provided participants with a sense of belonging while they forged relationships, interacted with others, and attended conferences.

Conversely, a few participants cited times that they did not feel supported either because there was limited interaction with others, or negative interaction with others. It was also noted that professional identity development was hindered when participants did not have opportunity to interact, or had limited or negative interactions. Several participants expressed that not having interaction regularly with individual who were going through the same thing, i.e., a hybrid CES doctoral program, hindered their PID.

Additionally, over half the participants cited that negative interactions, with faculty, peers, or other professionals was a hindrance to their identity development as well.

**Dimension: Having positive and supportive interactions – having non-supportive negative or limited interactions.** This dimension represents the type of interactions that can occur within a relationship or interaction. Interactions were characterized as supportive or non-supportive. Supportive relationships provided encouragement and assisted participants growing confidence. Non-supportive interactions were described generally in terms where the interaction was confrontational or challenging which made the participant feel un-supported and negatively impacted the growth of confidence. There were also instances where interactions were either very limited or non-existent and were considered by participants as negatively impacting there confidence and identity development.

Within its category, this dimension interacts directly with the other category dimensions; Forming life-long relationship – Having less significant, but influential interactions and Helping confidence and hindering confidence. Depending on the type of interaction it can have an impact on the relationship itself. If the interaction is un-supportive the relationship may become less significant. And in the interaction is supportive the relationship may strengthen. The other dimension within the property is helping confidence and hindering confidence. If the interaction is supportive then feedback will likely be received well and help confidence. If the interaction is non-supportive then the feedback might not be taken well and confidence could be hindered.

This dimension also directly impacts the dimension of Feeling like and imposter – Feeling confident with the category of Evolving sense of professional identity. Having supportive interactions impact the feelings the participants have about the process. Supportive interaction may help move the participant toward having more confidence, and having less supportive interactions may keep the person close to feeling like an imposter.

This dimension also impacts the dimensions within the category of experiential learning. When a participant experiences supportive relationships, they are more likely to try new CES tasks that had not been previously practiced. If they did not have supportive interactions, participants may be hesitant about trying new tasks.

P1 I1 My second experience was not the same it was almost disastrous and...but going through it was very, very difficult, um and it was almost like they required the professor to take on doctoral students as TAs in these residencies and she was very resistant and I had to take the high road in front of the students and not let them see the, the difficulties that were going on between us and it clearly personality difficulties and me understanding that I needed to rely on this person for a grade, I needed to rely on her to teach me, but everything that she did that hindered me, also taught me what I wouldn't want to do to somebody else I think that was, that was the hardest thing that I've had to get through, um in my program outside of dissertation...

P1 I1: but I still think that when you don't have that day to day contact it, you lose something, especially for this type of profession where its known for having that contact and being able to build cohesiveness, you know, with the people that you're working with, whether their clients or students, or you know even your colleagues, um, to be able to give the best that you can give.

P1 I2: she was also the one who said you can do this, um she was the one that said you have a lot to offer to this profession, um, and I can honestly tell you that our relationship is incredible and I have only physically met her twice.

P2 I1: I brought my family into my program, and this is what I am doing, this is what I cannot do anymore, so it's your duty to do it, ah, so, my family, ah, had

been here, constantly to take over what I used to do and I'm not doing anymore, I am a full time student and, this is what I want to do and they are supporting me 200%. Of course I'm working. And that is the key! If you do not have support from those around you, you cannot do cyber...

P2 I1: It was a pro, it was, it is a program with dual, with dual licenses; drug and alcohol, and mental health...Ah, their, although I had control within (inaudible word) the walls of the clinic, their administration were very staunchly resistant to change, resistant to, ah, to accommodate the needs of the community into the program. That was very frustrating...So I was held back of what I wanted to do...because the administration, administration of (inaudible word) did not want to change.

P3 I1: so it's very like isolating knowing that like, ok I'm a Ph.D. student in counselor education and supervision I'm going through all these you know classes, going through all this process, going through a these internal changes, you know, ideological changes, counseling changes, classes changes and, no one around me that I can have a conversation with really understands...or identifies with what I'm going through

P4 I1: I would say that the most helpful outside of the program is the support that I get from friends and family and colleagues...in regards to working on my Ph.D....

P4 I1: an experience at one of the residencies where, um, a, it was like four of these students, that um...the best way to say it, is, they were kind of like snobby, they thought they were better than anybody else and they were really quite rude...That was not a positive experience.

P4 I2: Um, I would say that at different trainings and seminars and conferences that I've gone to, when I talk about being in the Ph.D. program, the encouragement and the connection that you make with people was beneficial in building my personal identity. You know, a lot of people are like "oh, I would have loved to done that, but it's too late," I'm like "it's never too late" (laughter).

P5 I1: certainly the support of my peers, written comps was literally terrifying for me and my peers were instrumental, um, I was in two different study groups and they were huge in, o h , reflecting that I could do this thing that I was terrified of and, the more it supported me in process...

P5 I1: and we as a cohort had interesting experience with the whole statistics class process, um that was incredibly painful in the sense that after the first term

we said this professor is not working for us, please don't give us this person again...

P5 I1: and I imagined that would have been more nurturing going into it...And it wasn't particularly, (laughter) so there's been a tremendous I think frustration, sometimes for me, um, expressed by also some of my colleagues, um, but in the end I sure learned a lot, I couldn't tell you necessarily, you know, or quantify how I came about that learning, but, um, it was pretty significant...

P5 I2: being able to speak at a conference, that was another thing that I did along the way was entirely driven by me with support a lot of times from my peers in the cohort and another hugely meaningful experience for me was forming study groups for written comps and again having the experience of working, you know, really intimately with other of my cohort mates...

P7 I2: because I didn't feel particularly isolated in the hybrid program...I loved the time that we came together and hung out. I spent that time learning from people, but I was also very much okay, um, studying independently. I also had a group of people though that when I didn't understand something that I would just ask them and not feel embarrassed. I think all of those things helped...

P8 I1: a very difficult professor to work with, who um, I think he needed an internship person and I think his, um way of teaching is to challenge... (recording stopped for a second)...I don't do so well with conflict so when, you know, he would...we had computers face-to-face stuff, you know, via the computer, so here we all are looking at each other and he's, um, challenging what I said, sometimes that was very, very difficult and even when I would see him face-to-face, he, he was particularly...difficult

P8 I2: and I just remember she helped me feel so confident. I could send her an e-mail question, I even picked up the phone a few times and called her and just cause I needed to talk and needed somebody to say "you're going to make it, it's going to be okay, we're going to get through this..." but she supported me through that...she cared to listen and helped me to know that what I was doing was important to her. That relationship is one that I will remember always.

P8 I2: I think, well I know they gave me confidence and I hoped, you know, I was able to do the same for them... When there is, you know, a moment of self-doubt, every now and then that I think we all have, then there's somebody there that says "well come on now, you can do that, you know, you're great at this and how's that coming, how are you doing?" With whatever it is, you know, whatever point it was we were, "how's that coming, is your class going okay?" Or, you know when, it was dissertation time, "where are you, have you defended your proposal

and how's your writing?" And it's just somebody that's interested, I guess and because they're going through some of the same steps

P9 I1: And sometimes being in this, you know just this program it's like, I don't...talk to my cohort all the time versus, like in my, if I were in class with them all day and people that I interact with on a day to day basis, kind of have no idea of what I am doing...so, (laughter) I don't always get to talk about, these new things I'm putting into practice all the time

P9 I1: throughout the course of it there's, there has been some hopefulness, because if it was all like, oh I can't do this then I wouldn't still be here I don't think. So, there has been some of that, that's been fostered and kind of grown by, my advisor and everybody else in the cohort. Now I really do feel a lot more competent about it...but I think a lot of it came from working with my advisor ...who has been like pointing out those kinda things already. Like, oh yes you would be really good at this, or...um, that would be a really great thing for when you're working with your future students; like he's been throwing that stuff in there from the very beginning.

P9 I1: I ran into some of my masters professors there and they were like so excited that I had gone on to a doc program and, they were like, let us know how we can be of any use or what, if you just want to pick our brain and so...

P9 I2: so she has been like really available to help me get some more experience to kind of socialize myself into the field of other professionals and people that are kind of in the same specialty interest as me so like kids and adolescents and that kind of thing

P9 I2: And then it's been really nice to connect with faculty that I had in my Masters program because , you know, I've stayed in touch with them kind of professionally since graduating that program , but they're not connected to what I'm doing now, there just really into supporting my professional identity and development as a Counselor Educator.

### **Receiving Feedback**

Receiving feedback from others, such as faculty or other professionals, was cited as having a positive impact on the identity development process. Through receiving positive feedback participant's gained confidence in their skills and abilities, which progressed their identity development. Positive feedback validated their growth and

skills, and appears to have encouraged further pursuit of experiences that would be considered CES tasks. Constructive feedback lead to feeling humbled, but primarily to participants being self-reflective, and understanding that learning is an ongoing process. Some participants cited that receiving both positive and constructive feedback also provided an opportunity to reflect on their experiences and their evolving identity. It was also mentioned that feedback was a critical piece in a hybrid program with developing as a CES, since face-to-face interaction is limited. Additionally, feedback is also viewed in very broad terms, to include interactions with others (Individuals and organizations) that made the participants feel accepted, or not accepted (belonging). Conversely, feedback that was perceived as being placating or as not authentic hindered identity development. While a property of Connecting with Others, Feedback is very interrelated with Learning to be a CES, and Evolving Sense of Self.

**Dimension: Helping Development/Confidence – Hindering**

**Development/Confidence.** This dimension represents the range of feedback that either helps build confidence or hinders confidence. Feedback is also defined in the broadest of possible ways. Feedback can be very direct and formal that might be given from a faculty member to participant in an evaluative way, it can be feedback that is less formal, but still from faculty but non-evaluative. It can be from peers during interactions a and even in the most informal way when going to a conference or a residency and feeling welcomed into the environment. It can also be very subtle as when getting asked to teach a class and then return a gain, being asked to take on more responsibility. There is a sense of helping confidence grow and being validated as a CES.

This dimension has a reciprocal relationship with the dimension Forming life-long relationships- Having less significant, but influential interactions. Feedback that helps confidence could strengthen relationships and highlight the importance of ongoing interactions. Feedback that hinders confidence growth could weaken a relationship.

There is also a reciprocal relationship with one the dimensions within Engaging in experiential learning, specifically Engaging in a new task – Engaging in a task where some mastery is present. Feedback that helps with confidence will increase the chance that the participant will continue engaging in experiential learning, which ultimately aids is confidence growth and identity change. Feedback that hinders confidence may create resistance in continuing in trying new tasks. This dimension also impacts the dimension of engaging in CES tasks within the program and outside of the program. Helping feedback helps build confidence and encourages the participant to continue with experiential learning, and feedback that hinders confidence, may instill some reluctance on part of the participant, but in general they will still continue pursue the experiential learning.

This dimension has the greatest impact on the dimension of Feeling like an imposter – Feeling confident. With feedback the aids confidence, confidence grows. With feedback that hinders confidence, participant’s feelings of being an imposter, or having anxiety is more likely.

P1 I2: so she was also the one to give me a slap on the wrist and say no you can’t do this and, um so, I think helped me to see that you can’t get it for someone, they have to want it for themselves, you know, these are your colleagues they have to want it for themselves, and they can’t count on you to pick up the slack for them when they’re not in the place that they need to be in,

P2 I1: Ah, when you go to residencies, ah, when I, I went to residencies that the lar, the biggest impact...feeling, doing and, and seeing my professionals, listening to them . My experience as a teacher for the Masters student, ah, the feedback that I received from the director of the, ah, counselor educator and supervisor, ah, ah, faculty and the director, so those are the biggest impact that solidified my identity. So, they in, they inspect, put the seal on what I truly believe is me. So that was my biggest experience as teacher and receiving so many positive feedback from the Master, ah, professors. They says you are awesome, you're a natural, ah, all those who have observed my teaching gave me the same...um...ah, the same feed-back, of course.

P2 I2: Well it helped me, first of all, it validated what I thought my philosophy was and my identity as a counselor educator and supervisor that supported my thoughts . Uh, the constructive criticism, or the constructive feedback, uh, helped me to realize that learning how to teach is a lifelong process and I can never be certain that I know what I am doing.

P2 I2: However, when I went into the debriefing and they addressed that is, I just loved the way that you enmeshed with what you were teaching and the reaction of the students joined you, they can join into it. So, that feedback was very powerful.

P2 I2: Well it was, it was in a negative and in a positive way, the positive is, they validated my skills as an educator, but at the same talk they let me know, you did not do your research completely because we are the lead in gambling in XXX and our name is not in the reference page.

P2 I2: Yes I did, yes I did with in the same debriefing they normally use the sandwich evaluation, in which they place the great things and then they advise and then another great thing. One of the evaluation, uh, of constructive criticism that I did receive when I was doing the teaching, the role playing I was a little bit lost in there I just let the students take over the role play and then I observed but I did not interject and that was an area that I was offered constructive criticism. The ability for me to give feedback in the midst of it, so the students have the ability and the opportunity to practice that at the moment.

P3 I2: So I had to really quickly, whenever she gave me feedback at the very beginning I was very like standoffish with it, felt embarrassed and like "oh my gosh, you know, how is it that I'm a Ph.D. student and I can't even grasp this little applications of this theory?" And very quickly I had to become very like humble and receptive and now, you know after doing that for a whole week, I really

appreciated it, because now that theory is, you know, one that I am openly like pursuing and implementing in different parts of my practice.

P4 I2: I would say the most beneficial feedback I got was from the professors and it was written feedback on my papers, um, and the APA process. Is that what you're asking me? Oh, okay, okay. Um, I would say the written feedback on my papers, because online that's how it's done, from the instructors helped in my identity of understanding and developing my APA ability.

P4 I2: Um, it just makes me feel like I know what I'm doing in regards to writing a paper or an article or, you know, something that requires APA... Um, wow, I would say the feedback that was most beneficial was to be able to concisely put my ideas down on paper.

P5 I1: my major advisor had mentioned that of the 17 or 18 people in our cohort, um, she was really open that I was least counselor educated oriented of, of the group... well I guess, I heard a bit of criticism in that, um, which made sense, it didn't make sense at the time because, I, I was, in there for the end purpose, I wanted a Ph.D. ... I think her comment got me thinking in more along the lines of, oh I wonder what that's like because I always felt a bit different that most of my cohort mates, um, in terms of there weren't more than, I think maybe 1, 1 or 2 of us that were in just the focus of practice...

P5 I2: the second year student evaluations were incredibly meaningful for me in terms of knowing that I went into it not wanting to be...the popular teacher, but the teacher that helps them learn and getting that kind of feedback from students was really rich and validating experience for me.

P5 I2: and you're getting feedback about how you show up as a professional. Anyway, it was a rich experience, in terms of both being able to see myself as how I compare to others in my cohort and to get feedback from the professors along the way and from my advisor was just a really rich experience, that I never would have had, had I not done the program.

P5 I2: So her feedback was also really meaningful and that myself questioning process was off putting and I was aware of that for her and about me and she wasn't even really sure that it was a good fit at all and she moved from that place to seeing me do a teaching segment and I moved, you know, in my own self-confidence, so she go to witness that, so I think that was really meaningful as well.

P6 I2: absolutely, um, most of it positive. Fairly early on I think I guess I identified myself as a decent writer, which I thought I was, I mean, but by no

means, I not a Hemingway, but um, I thought of myself as a decent writer. A lot of feedback was positive, you know, “you’re a good writer, you should keep writing, you should try to publish this,” you know, “you should pursue this.”

P6 I2: But then a lot of the technical feedback on, you know, I was just busted on my dissertation, that’s frustrating (laughter), because I had to go back through all my chapters, I just, I screwed-up “et al.” I should have known, I thought the period was behind “et” instead of “al”, and so (laughter)

P6 I2: The feedback was probably more scholarly, you know, almost exclusively in the scholarly writing perspective, the feedback you get in all the papers, in all my dissertation work, um, in projects. So mostly in just formalizing my scholarly writing skills, being a better writer, understating APA style, understanding literature reviews, the use of the library, referencing and all that kind of stuff. So I guess that’s an aspect of professional identity, but more, um, scholarship in writing is what “feedback” contributed to.

P7 I2: I’ve had both peers and instructors kind of comment on it, like just get rid of your complex and just be confident in who you are and blah, blah, blah. And there was an instructor that I had at one point who really kind of called me out on the anxiety and just like what is this about; this is ridiculous; this is a barrier... I just think that being called-out on that, um, was really good time for me to engage in some self-improvement and stuff like that.

P7 I2: Um, I don’t know that it taught me a whole lot , but it made me, kind of, because I respected the person so much and really believed that the interaction was an authentic observation, it made me stop a little bit and do like, wow I really am anxious; what is this about? Just take the time to kind of reflect on it. Um, and, you know, think about my education, kind of how I wanted, what I thought was deficient and how I wanted to improve things and what type of clinician I really wanted to be. It just made me think a little bit about, um, not only my skills but my professional identity in the way I was portraying myself, because I think I was so worried about, um, not being strong enough or somehow being deficient in that I wasn’t fully acknowledging all of the strengths that I do have.

P8 I2: You know, if the instructor or even a classmate indicates that, you know, that’s not quite enough, then it tells me, oh okay, I need to do a little more. Or if I’m going in the wrong direction with an idea or a thought or whatever, then okay, let’s come back this way a little bit. So I do think feedback from others provide that measure of how I’m doing.

P9 I1: like talking with my advisor, just kind of learning about what, like transferable skills I really have. Because before I was a counselor, I worked with

kids and I did like team building and that kind of thing and, so how can I use the stuff that I already know how to do or that I'm already doing as a counselor and then, grow that into being a counselor educator, so maybe it, so it was more like, not starting from scratch...

P9 I2: Faculty has been really helpful overall but I had a specific interaction with one of my professors last summer, probably. She made a note to me about it was almost the end of the quarter, I guess, and I had done perfectly on all of the assignments, did really great presentations, all that kind of stuff but she docked me points on my participation because I didn't speak up in class very much. So, and that kind of came out of nowhere for me, but she was noticing that, I guess... she kind of questioned me about it, um, about...clearly I knew the information what was holding me back from talking more...So we kind of processed a little bit about where I thought I felt I fit into the group and in my professional development, where I thought I was at and what right I thought I had to start...you know, making statements to other people and that kind of thing. And it was really transferable to my overall development to becoming an educator and supervisor and what I thought about my authority to say something...So that was a really impactful interaction and it was like a, almost about a silly thing like, "why don't you talk more in class?" But then it turned into a much larger...you know, issue, I guess...

### **Learning How to Be a CES**

#### **LEARNING TO BE A COUNSELOR EDUCATOR AND SUPERVISOR**

involves learning new information from course content, engaging in experiential learning activities associated with being a CES. Tasks associated with being a CES are teaching, supervising and leadership. These activities occur as part of the program requirements (practicum and internship) and outside of program requirements. Additionally other learning occurs vicariously by observing faculty, other CES, and peers. It is a combination of these various learning opportunities that appear to move the participants forward in their PID. This category is very interrelated with Connecting with Other. It is through connecting with others and receiving feedback about progress with CES tasks

that lead participants grow more confident and to continue to evolve their identity as a CES.

### **Engaging in Conceptual Learning (Coursework)**

Conceptual learning includes reading and writing assignments that would be typically required as part of the coursework. Conceptual learning about the history of the counseling profession, gave several participants an understanding of how far the profession has come and a sense pride. A few participants cited that just being in the program made them feel more like a CES. A few participants cited that there were assignments that helped them make greater meaning of the counseling profession and of what it means to be a CES. Many participants cited the focus on identity development in the curriculum helped them process their own professional identity as they evolved into CES.

**Dimension: Doing assignments – making meaning of assignments.** This dimension represents the range of how participant engage in conceptual learning. Participants indicated that they engaged in the course work by reading material and completing assignments. Not much emphasis was placed on the actual conceptual learning. Some participants reflected on the actual assignments given and placed it within the context of what they were doing. They made meaning of the course work and saw how what was being learned could be applied to their work as future CES.

This dimension directly impacts the dimension of experiential learning, as much of what is learned in the classroom, the participants now have an opportunity apply new

knowledge. If participants have already been making meaning of the assignments, then experiential learning is a smoother transition.

This dimension also impacts Feeling like an imposter – Feeling confident.

Participants stated that doing the course work made them already feel like a CES.

P3 I1: when I started, like with my Ph.D. program...just like within the first few semesters, it made me feel like counselor, and a counselor educator and counselor supervisor but, like all of it together was a much more complex and...like esteemed profession...

P3 I1: I attribute that to the program, I mean that helped my Identity a lot just because, you know, it, it gave me all that background information, you know and like current information and more in-depth ...you know, there was, there's a lot of focus and a lot of the program work on what it is to be a counselor and, you know, a counselor educator and, you know a supervisor, how all those roles, you know, play with each other play, you know, in the profession so a lot of that like really helped give me a grounding for what I'm supposed to be, now and in the future ...

P3 I2: I think the first time that I really felt that I could be a CES was actually in one of my research classes where it was the quantitative research methods, yea it was the quantitative and all the statistics and all of that

P3 I2: And so the professor was talking about how when you're working on your documents, like your prospectus and you're turning-it-in, that each time you turn-it-in that you need to like kind of really revise it, it was like for this one course that the whole course was prepping you for writing your research and, you know, that kind of stuff.

P3 I2: Well, actually, um, you know in the program, I forget what course it was, but it was really about like becoming a leader in the field and you know a role model and kind of a guiding person in the profession and you know it like spanned an entire semester a couple of courses all dealing with this leadership role that everyone has and it really didn't click with me. Like okay, I guess, I am supposed to be a leader and as a supervisor or whatnot and then three years later I became part of a local organization, the XXXXX, there's like three hundred members in it... Well, somehow, I'm not even quite sure what motivated me to like run for a board position, but I became like a secretary of this board. And then a year later, like now, I'm the vice president of a board. And all the stuff that I

really learned early on in the program, when it really didn't apply to me all makes sense now I'm in an actual like leadership position.

P4 I1: learning about the different teaching techniques and, the curriculum was absolutely wonderful, and all the professors are great, they're really very helpful, willing to work with you. It, it's just a really nice...feeling I liked it, it was good.

P4 I1: In all of the courses there usually was, some form of an assignment where you explored how your professional identity ...in one of the examples that comes to mind, one, one of the beginning classes was, to um, reflect on a teacher, throughout your life that had the most influence on you and how that impacted, had that influence on you and, you know, basically how you got to where you are...

P5 I2: I didn't know anything about higher ed., how higher ed. functioned, what it was to move through that process...even simple things like what's the difference between an associate or an assistant professor, what does it mean to be "tenured" and different types of possibilities that were out there,

P7 I1: the doctoral program was the first time I had ever really been asked to reflect upon my professional identity, um, and there were, you know, a couple of times within the classroom that we were given the opportunity to speak up and give our perspective on various issues , but, I think what contributed most to my professional identity throughout the program were some really, really well-crafted assignments that um, really implored me to utilize some of the theories that we had discussed in class and really apply them to my own practice and how I would do things . So, for example; ah, one assignment that I remember completing was a clin, clinician disclosure and supervisor disclosure and while I had done those for my professional work in the past, I never spent a lot of time really thinking about theories and just the fact that it was an academic assignment. We had to provide references throughout our disclosure, so it was really the first time that I, um, was very, very thoughtful about how theory applied to my practice...

P9?: And then that's when I really start thinking about like okay, "how is what I am doing now...going to impact me in the future" whether it's you know, an assignment creating a lesson plan or a syllabus or whatever, that is a real life assignment because it's not something I just have to do this week to jump through a hoop, it's something that I really want to do. So it helps to take it outside of the context, I think, of what I am doing.

P9 I1: then the rest of it was like when I was actually learning stuff, so through the course work, I felt like I was picking up stuff that would be useful ...and now

I have on the horizon actually teaching and I have supervised some masters students as part of their practicum and internship and...um, so learning more about, being a (inaudible). It's been helpful and just the general how to of it.

P9 I1: I think I took the counselor education course in the fall, so that was kind of the beginning of my second year, and that was for sure a big turning point when I realized like oh, I have a lot of these skills that I already needed and I have a lot of really good ideas about stuff that I could do in courses with students that are...you know, as good as anyone else's ideas...

### **Engaging in Experiential Learning (CES Tasks)**

CES tasks are defined as teaching, supervising, presenting or attending conferences, conducting research and taking on leadership roles. These activities could be part of course requirements, such as with practicum and with internship. Participants indicated that by doing these tasks they were able to apply conceptual knowledge and skills they observed others doing such as peers and faculty, and it also gave them a sense of being a CES. Receiving feedback was also directly linked to this property, in that receiving feedback, formal or informal, helped build the confidence in the participants when these tasks were new experiences. This confidence was critical in engaging in further CES tasks and moving the participants forward in their PID.

**Dimension: Engaging in CES tasks as part of the program – engaging in CES tasks outside of program requirements.** This dimension represents engaging in CES task, teaching, supervision, leadership, research, that is either a requirement of the hybrid program or that is sought by the participant outside of the program.

**Dimension: Engaging in a new task – engaging in a task where some mastery is present.** This dimension represents participants engaging in CES tasks that are new experiences to them and CES tasks that have been previously performed. Participants

would experience more anxiety and self-doubt with tasks that are new to them, while those tasks that have been performed before, participants would be more confident with.

This dimension is reciprocal with the dimension in Receiving feedback; Helping confidence – hindering confidence. If tasks are new, more helping feedback is needed, if tasks have been performed before and confidence has been built, less feedback is needed.

P1 I1: Working as an instructor through my internships and things like that I, I really began to um associate more with counselor educators being more of a counselor educator and I think my whole uh I'm geared more toward the counselor educator, as opposed to just a counselor, um it's something that I know that I really want to do full time and I'm, I'm doing everything in my power to get there...

P1 I2: I just finished developing a teaching platform for them on how to deal with integrate or bring in churches and educate them on hospice and palliative care, so opened up an area for me to be able to offer something to them

P2 I2: In order to do that I had to go and attend a class and teach back that and all that good stuff for the state on the training of trainers event. When they feel like me to train something that was developed by the state, they bring me in, they teach me the course for one week, the last day I have to teach back for one hour to the engineers and they will qualify me or disqualify me from teaching that course. So that has been a huge contributor to my identity... In the way that when I present information that I have not researched, that is not developed by me, but it was taught by me with the complete curriculum. So I was not, um, familiar with the resources, I became familiar with the syllabus, I became familiar with the curriculum.

P4 I2: They encourage you to join the ACA and, you know, which gives you more trainings, but I was already a member of that anyway... And the XXXX, which is the XXXX Counselors Association, I've been a member of that in the different divisions for at least, oh gosh, fourteen years plus, but so that's just part of who I am and what I do

P5 I1: I contacted XXX where I had gotten my Masters program and they um, were needing an adjunct teacher for summer semester and I thought okay let's just jump on it and after I signed up for it...I got excited about helping people learn...

P5 I2: so the outside experiences I think were...some of the richest for me

P5 I2: again the realization, oh my gosh I have to teach and then thinking about the least painful way to go about that and recognizing that probably my alma mater for my Masters program might be the most welcoming for that opportunity, since I had relationships with them, um, so, it was scary but it felt doable to put myself forward as a possible, um, adjunct professor for them

P5 I2: And then just watching over the years as the interns flow through the agency that I've worked with and, um, you know, seeing how different each of these interns were in their development process and how they all start out at different places but they, you know, finish fairly similarly in terms of being ready to approach the world of clinical work, post-graduation. Um, so that, being able to witness and help guide that process was, um, really meaningful for me.

P5 I2: So I was kind of in uncharted territory and I pretty much got annihilated in the, um, the presentation, um, in the sense that I invited discussion questions and because of the interdisciplinary mix of professionals, um, it was not necessarily what you would say successful.

P5 I2: Um, then when the opportunity to present much the same material came up in my professional home, which I consider the XXXXX, um, and there conference was coming to XXXX, um, and they picked it, I, um, felt like I was in a much better place to be able to do that, so again things that I never ever could have imagined doing prior to starting this process.

P6 I1: I think the experiences outside that have helped, would be teaching as an adjunct professor, on and off for, almost twelve years so , teaching and interacting with students um, has really helped, um, presenting, professional presentations have really helped I always present at my, ah, local (inaudible word) counseling conference

P6 I2: I mean, so I did three exploratory presentations over the last year and a half with that same group, so professional conferences and presentations were huge.

P7 I2: So, um, this year I've presented at several different conferences, I've applied for a couple of grants and my attitude the whole time has been like, I am expected to try, what's the worst that can happen? I'll be rejected, that's not a big deal. Um, if I get rejected, I can always use this to build on to a new project.

P9 I1: I went to the ACES conference for the first time this past fall...and it was, that was a really great experience because I got to be around so many other people who do that, like that's what they do, they're counselor educators and supervisors

and, you know, learning stuff from the conference sessions and then also just being around people who are really like, really happy that this was my first ACES and, like, happy that I was a doc student and so welcoming to the profession...

P9 I2: so it's not just in the program that I'm gaining some identity development it's outside of there as well it's at my work setting and then, in doing some teaching and training and conferences, like, outside of related school

P9 I2: I think, because I started, um, supervising while I was in the program as well, so, some of the stuff that I have been doing work-wise has paralleled with that, so it's not just in the program that I'm gaining some identity development it's outside of there as well it's at my work setting and then,

### **Learning Vicariously**

Through observations participants were able to observe others already in the role of CES engaging in CES tasks. Some participants expressed that watching faculty teach, provided an opportunity to assess techniques and skills and helped learn how to teach. A few participants expressed "wanting to be like..." a faculty member they were observing. Additionally, observing faculty helped participants better understand how to be a CES. A few participants expressed observing their peers exposed them to the other specialties within the counseling profession. This exposure not only highlighted the differences but the commonality, across the specialties, work environments, and geography, which increased the understanding of the counseling profession and their own PID within that community. Further, attending conferences served as an act of socializing in to the professional community. Observing with other CES at conferences allowed for participants to understand what it means be a CES and have a professional community. A sense of being welcomed and part of a community was expressed. Through these observations many participants expressed opportunities for vicarious learning. Part of observing others also includes the opportunity to assess behaviors, skills, and techniques

and discard them if they did not fit within the professional identity framework being developed by the respective participant.

**Dimension: Internalizing observations – discarding observations.** This dimension represents participants observing faculty, other professionals, and peers engage in CES tasks and determining whether they will emulate what they have observed or if they will discard it because it does not fit within who they see themselves as a CES.

This dimension does directly impact the dimension in Evolving sense of PI; Feeling confident. If participants observe behavior and skill that they want to emulate, it is because it resonates with them in some way. Their confidence will likely increase. If they discard what they have observed, how they feel about the PID process may remain the same, or they may feel more empowered that they are confident about making a decision to discard observed behavior.

P1 I2: I watched her and I remember looking at her and thinking I want to be like, I want to be able to teach counseling the way she does, I want to be able to teach counseling the way I teach Christendom...

P5 I1: I actually got fabulous, vicarious school counseling, counselor education through, oh goo, XXX, one of my classmates, who um, started out living in (Inaudible), and move to, well she got, she's the one who got the job at XXX...

P5 I1: I learned so much about what it is to be a school counselor because that was another thing that I was very naïve about, so it was this process of vicarious education through my peers, through then having the, uh, the requirement have an aspect of teaching in my uh, internship and, just seeing the process itself of, you know being in higher ed. And what that looked like in our actual program that made it appealing and feel obtainable for me.

P5 I1: the experiences within the program were witnessing effective teaching techniques, um, experiencing teachers that I felt communicated the material in a way that made rich and integratable, and then (inaudible) witnessing...some teachers that, some instructors that, professors that were less than dynamic...

P5 I2: and they were willing to have me and I had a trusted colleague there to model from

P5 I2: so particularly my cohort mate that was my roommate during the program went on to get a job at a very prestigious institution before she was even finished with her Ph.D. and , so her journey was such a huge learning experience for me for...certainly she was the exception rather than the rule as far as from going from never taught at all to getting, you know, a position at a very well respected, um, university. Um, but, watching kind of the questions that she never knew to ask, or the experiences that she has had along the way has been a huge vicarious learning for me and without that connection I never would have had that learning

P7 I2: I would say being exposed to, um, to a huge, wide variety of professionals within the program, um, and kind of realizing the commonality across the different fields made me just think about research ideas a little bit differently.

P8 I1: getting to know the professors and learning what their particular, you know, theoretical views are and you know, does that fit with I do, or does it not and learning from their various styles,

P8 I2: I guess that was part of the transition, I identified with them as students , I identified with her as the instructor and , um, I remember thinking several times, you know, “I wish I could be like her.” She’s a little bit older than I am, but not a lot.

P9 I1: I was kind of motivated to maybe, propose to present at like WACES or other conferences, cause it seemed like once I saw the level of it, I was like, oh I can do some of this, you know...some people were like, really amazing, but others were like newer professionals kind of presenting on their research or, just kinda stuff that they had noticed or were working on their research. Oh I could totally do it! I just see how I started to fit into this world and kind of where I would be in a new professional kind of way and then ultimately down the line

### **Tentative Theory**

Based on the second round of data collection and analysis, a tentative theory has emerged. Participants entered their respective hybrid programs with varying degrees of their counselor professional identity developed. One participant stated that she did not have much of an identity before starting the program yet she had a lot of teaching and supervising experience. Most of the participants stated that their identity was very

singular, such as being a counselor, and one participant had already been in a previous CES Doc program, so that participant's CES identity had already seemed to have been forming prior to starting the program.

Upon starting their respective hybrid programs a few participants stated that they already felt their identity as a CES was already starting to form just by being in the program and starting the coursework. Several participants stated that the course work was very helpful to their identity development in that they learned about the history of the counseling profession, learned about the various roles of a CES, and learned about the importance of scholarship and research. While conceptual learning was a factor in identity development of these participants, it was a very small factor compared to some of the other factors.

Connecting with Others emerges as the largest and most significant category and experience for the participants. It is through connecting with others that participants begin observing others and learning vicariously, and more importantly Engaging in Experiential Learning, or CES tasks such as teaching, supervising, research, and leadership activities. It is also through connecting with others that participants receive feedback, feel supported and validated and begin to have their CES identity start to evolve.

Most of the participants formed significant relationships with either one person, typically a faculty member that served as a mentor, or a small group that served either as a formal or informal cohort. These significant relationships seem to be critical to the participants as far as providing support and encouragement. Other relationships, that were

less significant, which could be informal interactions or networking were also invaluable as they provided support too, allowed participants to observe others, feel included and part of a community. Further participants emphasized that a lack of interaction on a regular basis, or negative interactions were detrimental to PID.

It appears that once participant started to connect with others and to observe others and begin to engage in new CES task and receive some positive evaluation, confidence is built and identity evolves.

It is important to note that having a support system of some sort through significant and less significant relationships, along with engaging in CES tasks, and receiving validation through some type of feedback is the core process in the PID of CES.

As Identity starts to evolve participants spoke about certain aspects of their identity evolving, such as the teaching aspect, or the supervision aspect, or research or leadership. It seems that if a participant already had experience in one of these aspects that that particular participant already had some confidence in that area. It also seemed easier for participant to communicate their identity development when they talked about it by focusing on these various roles or aspects. Often times participants focused only on an aspect at a time, but there were also several that spoke about their identity evolving in total.

The following diagram represents how the categories, properties, and dimensions influence each other.

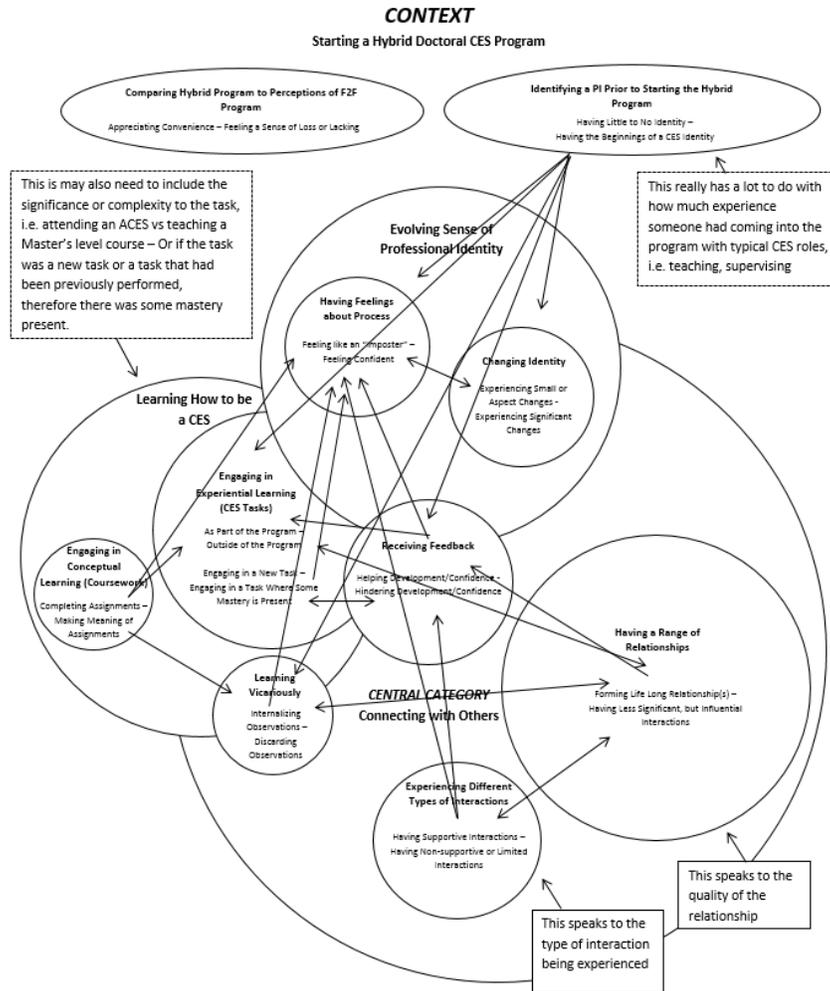


Figure 3. Diagram Showing Relationships Between Categories, Properties and Dimensions 0 Second Round of Interviews.

### Discussion

Upon thorough analysis of the data categories changed slightly, but there were significant changes with the properties and dimensions were identified, defined and relationships between dimensions were ascertained. Though a tentative theory has been formed, it was determined that further data collection was needed in order to thicken the emerging theory of the professional identity development of counselor educators in hybrid doctoral programs. The areas that needed more information were related to trying

to better understand each participants understanding of their professional identity before entering the program, along with any experience that they had with teaching, supervising, leadership, or research, and how those two things may have impacted their identity development as a CES. There were also questions related to the participants growing confidence related to their identity development. Interest in this line of questioning, was specific to what contributed to the participants growing confidence, with the intention of seeing if their growing confidence was attributed to the major themes that had emerged, i.e. relationships with others, doing CES tasks, and feedback. While initially it did not seem that the line of questioning related to the participants personal qualities gave rise to relevant data, there was still enough to warrant further questioning. The idea of being resilient became of interest as participants described their experiences in the hybrid program and in the development of their identity. Lastly, given the primary purpose of the research, it seemed important to ask participants felt that being in a hybrid program was a factor that contributed to their identity development. Based on these areas of inquiry, the following questions were drafted to be used in the third round of interviews with the participants.

1. Please reflect on your PI entering your Hybrid Program, how do you think your previous identity has impacted your PID as a CES? How does you previous identity fit in with your evolving or newly formed PI as a CES?

Probing question to be asked if necessary:

- Did your previous experience prior to entering the hybrid program with either teaching, supervising, leadership or research, or lack of experience, impact your professional identity development?
2. While in your hybrid doctoral program, what contributed to your growing confidence? How did your growing confidence impact your professional identity development?

Questions posed if examples are needed:

- Was it receiving feedback, if yes, who was this feedback from and why was it important?
  - Was it from connecting with others, if so what was so important about connecting with others?
  - Was it engaging in CES tasks, such as teaching, supervising, leadership or research, if yes, explain why was it so important?
3. Tell me if being resilient contributed to your identity development in your hybrid program. If it did, please explain in what way was it a contributor? If no, what is a better descriptor for your experience?

Probing question to be asked if needed:

- Where do you think this resiliency, or other descriptor came from?
4. How do you think being in a hybrid program impacted your overall development as a CES?

The initial study designed was developed to have the third interview as the member check. Because further questioning was needed, a request was made to the IRB to change the study design to allow for a member check to be conducted after the third interview by email. Once approval from the IRB was received, participants were then contacted by email to request the third and final interview.

## **APPENDIX K**

### **Third Round of Interviews**

#### **Introduction**

Using the questions that were derived from the theoretical sampling from the second round of data collection interview three was scheduled with all of the participants. The third round of interviews was completed in July 2014. Interviews were once again transcribed, de-identified and sent to the respective participant for review. Once participants approved the transcripts, transcripts were then coded selectively. Prior to beginning coding though I reflected on my thoughts about what I felt had emerged just from conducting the interviews and transcribing the data.

My initial impressions of the third round interview data were that most of the participants felt that their previous identity as a counselor was either part of the framework or the foundation for their new or evolving identity. All of the participants felt that their previous identity was still a part of their new or evolving identity. Though none of the participants clearly articulated that their original identity directly impacted their identity development, but instead it seems that their initial identity was somehow folded in or used as a platform/framework. What was interesting is that it seemed that there is evidence to support that the participant's previous experience had a direct influence on their identity development as CES. It seems that most of the participants that had significant prior "life" experience, or experience directly related to the core tasks generally associated with being a CES, teaching, supervising, leadership and research, may have had an easier time with their growing confidence in becoming a CES. Two

participants had significant experience with teaching and supervising prior to coming into their hybrid doctoral program, and through their interviews it seemed as though their identity as a CES was already forming. There were three other participants who did not have direct experience, but transferrable experience that expressed being very confident in knowing that they wanted to be a CES, essentially having no doubt that this was the direction for them. The remaining four did not express having direct experience, or a lot, if any transferrable experience, and it seemed that through their identity development they may have experienced more self-doubt and had more significant gains in growing confidence.

When asked about their growing confidence all participants related this to either their relationships with others, mostly a mentor, faculty member, or cohort, as well as receiving feedback and encouragement and being able to engage in experiential learning. This information directly supports the primary categories that have emerged. Specifically the central category of Connecting with Others and Receiving Feedback, as these were the most mentioned contributors to growing confidence.

All but one participant felt that resilience, or a version of resilience such as persistence or being self-motivated or directed were important to their experience developing their professional identity in a hybrid program. The one outlier response was that being resilient was not a good descriptor because the experience in general was “fun”. In this same interview when she said a better descriptor than resilience was fun, she later went on to describe some challenges she initially had getting the hang of technology in the hybrid program, but she did not elaborate, nor did she go into any depth.

When coding began it was done through the lens of the categories, properties, and dimensions that had already surfaced. The idea to strengthen these existing concepts, and further flesh out the interrelationships between them. Through the coding process all of the primary categories were strengthened. There were a two properties that needed to be clarified by having their title changed, a third property title changed and it moved under a different category. Dimensions were impacted as well with the analyzing of the third round of data. A few dimensions had their titles changed, but their meaning did not materially change. The biggest impact was that two new dimensions were added under the context to more comprehensively explain the context of the PID process in a hybrid program. These changes are explained in more detail and organized under their respective category.

Under the context, of Beginning Hybrid Doctoral Program the property of Identifying a PI Prior to Starting the Hybrid Program was changed to Describing Self Going into Hybrid Program. This change was necessitated because the data from the third round suggested that it was not just the participants beginning identity that was important, their previous experience and their ability to be resilient also played a significant part in PID process. In changing the title it to be more inclusive, it was also necessary to add two more dimensions. The dimension added addressed the range of experience the participants had prior to entering the hybrid program and the range of resiliency they brought with them. The two dimensions were titled Having Little Experience – Having Significant Experience and Being Passively Resilient – Being Actively Resilient. Having Little Experience – Having Significant Experience represents the participant who entered the program with primarily clinical experience, having no direct teaching or supervising

experience, it represents the participants who had transferrable experience, experience that was more indirect like teaching bible studies, substitute teaching or training, and it represent the participants who had significant direct experience like teaching at a college or university, or was the primary supervisor at a mental health clinic. In general the participants were very seasoned professionals before entering the program. All of them had been practicing for many years and had their licenses. All of this meant some came in with a higher degree of confidence than others, but in general there was a fair degree of confidence already established especially in the areas where strong experiences, or mastery of a task was already established. Being Passively Resilient – Being Actively Resilient was necessary because participants described aspect of themselves, primarily having varying degrees of resiliency. Given the nature of a hybrid program, the need for self-directed learning, and lack of structured, ongoing support, these participants cited needing resilience was important. This directly impact identity development in without it the participants would not have likely completed the program. Again all of these aspects of who the participant was as they entered their respective hybrid program had a direct bearing on their PID experience.

The property Vicarious Learning, which was initially under Learning How to be a CES, was moved under Connecting with Others and the title changed to Comparing Self to Others. This was done because several participants directly expressed comparing themselves to their peers as a means of gaging their competency and identity development process. This was represented by adding another dimension under this property called Feeling Behind others – Feeling Ahead of Others. Other participants indirectly expressed comparing their skill level to the skill level of faculty and feeling as

if they wanted to be like the faculty they observed. Some participants expressed watching faculty and not resonating with what they were seeing, again a form of comparing. For these comparisons to be made the participants needed to be in the presence of others, so this property was moved under Connecting with Others.

The title for the dimension Helping Development/Confidence – Hindering Development/Confidence, under the property of Receiving Feedback, changed. The primary reason for the change is the dimension seemed to reflect more the outcome of feedback and did not accurately reflect the type of feedback experienced. The title was changed to Receiving Positive feedback – Receiving Constructive to No Feedback. This also added more clarity and highlighted the interrelationship between the property of Having Feelings About the Process, which had its title changed to Growing Confidence, and the property of Receiving Feedback. Again this was done to more accurately reflect the outcome of Receiving Feedback, engaging in Conceptual and Experiential Learning.

As was done with the prior two rounds of data, the new coded data was organized under the appropriate category, property and dimension that also provided definition of each and other pertinent details. This document represents the overall categories, properties, and dimension, with the definition and the supporting data pulled from each round of interviews. This document serves to not only show all of the concepts and how they are interrelated, it also shows how these concepts are support by the data.

Once the coding was done and the necessary changes were made to the categories, properties and dimensions, the existing diagrams were re-worked to include all of the changes. Throughout the process a diagram was evolving that specifically addressed the

relationships between all of the concepts that had emerged. This representation was done through series of overlapping and connecting circles. Another diagram was created to try and capture the dynamism of the PID process. This diagram shows a zig-zag line representing the evolving identity, moving through a funnel representing learning how to be a CES, mostly encapsulated in a large circle representing connecting with others. Another, third, diagram was created to represent a more conceptual, and straightforward look at the process and the interlinking categories. These diagrams were created to add richness and dimension to the understanding of the PID for doctoral students in a CES.

Once the coding was complete and the analysis of the data was done, along with the diagram being changed and created, an additional step was done to ensure that each participants experience was represented within the evolving theory. In order to accomplish this the transcripts were reorganized by participant, instead of by interview rounds. I then went participant by participant and read all three of their transcripts in order to get the full and complete story of each participant and then wrote a narrative representing their story using the framework of the evolving PID theory. As an example I read interview one through three of participant 1 (P1). Through that process I got a better sense of not only how her story resonated with the evolving theory, but a greater glimpse of the theory actually working. This exercise actualized the theory. It was shown that most of the participant's experiences were represented explicitly with in the theory. There were a couple of instance when the definitions established needed to be clarified or expanded to fully capture some of the nuances of all of the participants experiences. In general, what was made clear through this process was that participants experience did follow the frame of the evolving theory and helped to solidify it.

The following information represents the changes, or revisions made to the categories, properties, and dimension, and well as their subsequent definitions.

### **Beginning of Hybrid Doctoral CES Program (Context)**

The first category Beginning of Hybrid Doctoral CES Program serves as the context for the process of professional identity development of the participants. It is because the participants are enrolled or have graduated from the hybrid program that has been the genesis of their experience of developing their professional identity as a CES. When sharing experiences about the hybrid program participants expressed having a range of emotions from feeling isolated, feeling frustrated, to feeling positive about the program and appreciative of its inherent flexibility. When expressing these feelings, comparisons were often made between the hybrid experience and their perceptions of what a traditional face-to-face program would have been like. Further, all the participants entered their hybrid program with varying degrees of experience, varying states of initial professional identity and having certain personal characteristics that were needed as they developed their PID. All participants had counseling experiences and all held licenses in their respective States, but there were differences with experience in teaching, supervising, presenting, and leaderships, which are typically associated with being a CES. Participants also expressed difference in their identity as they entered the hybrid program. While most stated that they have a counselor or clinician identity, such as an addictions counselor, or a school counselor, not having an identity and having a CES identity already beginning to form was also expressed. Lastly, as part of the context, participants expressed having some form of resilience that they could draw from as they entered and continued in their hybrid program.

These feelings, experiences and characteristics impacted the identity development process in that they provided the general context for the professional identity development of each of the participants.

### **Comparing Hybrid Program to Perceptions of F2F Program**

As participants shared their experiences in the hybrid program most of them compared their experience to what they believed they would have experienced in a traditional, face-to-face, program. Many recognized that the online program offered them convenience that the F2F program did not. Additional comparisons centered around the perception of having less opportunity in the hybrid program for interaction with faculty, mentoring and for gaining CES experience such as teaching and supervising that is often available in a face-to-face format. This comparison also included many participants questioning the hybrid program and wondering if the hybrid program would be seen as less credible than a traditional program. Along with comparing participants expressed a range of feeling about the hybrid program. This range included having positive feelings about the convenience of it being online, feeling the learning content was good, and that the instructors were experienced and highly credentialed to more negative feelings about the lack of face-to-face interaction, feeling isolated, and feeling that there was limited experiential learning opportunities available within the program.

**Dimension: Appreciating convenience – feeling a sense of loss or lacking.** This dimension ranges from participants appreciating the convenience of being in a program that is online, where they can complete the course work at their convenience, day or night, and that they do not have to up root themselves and their family to pursue a

doctoral degree. The convenience of not having to completely change your life, the ability to continue to work, have a family keep your friends was very much appreciated by most if not all of the participants. Participants frequently compared, or wondered, how being in a traditional doctoral program might be different. A few participants thought that there were fewer opportunities to connect with faculty in order to get mentorship, as well as fewer opportunities to apply the information and practice the skills they were learning. It was mentioned by a few participants that in a traditional doctoral program there would be opportunities to teaching and supervise, conduct research and connect in general with faculty and peers. There was a sense of having lost those opportunities by electing to be in a hybrid program.

This dimension does not seem to impact any other property of dimension, in that it is a constant, meaning that these feelings did not seem to impact the participant's experiences.

P1 I1: I know all of my friends agree that we now question the hybrid platform, it works for us in terms of working, and having families and stuff, but I think it's across the board we think we would have had a different experience if we did a more traditional format, um, traditional being brick and mortar and maybe getting a little bit more... I still think that when you don't have that day to day contact it, you lose something, especially for this type of profession where its known for having that contact and being able to build cohesiveness, you know, with the people that you're working with...

P1 I3: I think there is in a hybrid is that you're doing online and you're, um, you, if you don't motivate yourself, you don't have a professor saying you didn't turn this in or, you know, this is necessary or whatever, but, you know, you have to be the one that makes sure that you complete it, it really falls on the student. So whether you're successful or dying, it all has to do with you being able to be self-motivated in the hybrid program, um, because you don't have that constant contact, you're not interacting with peers and you don't have that structured support that you would have in a brick and mortar.

P1 I3: I have a friend of mine who came into their first hybrid program on the PhD. Level, it wasn't for counseling education, it was actually for a public policy program and they had more difficulty with it because it was their first hybrid program and they never had to kind of be self-reliant, um, to be able to make sure that they could actually do this

and they talked about the struggle of not having that constant support and not being able to meet-up with your peers in the library or thing like that or being able to walk into a professors office during office hours. They talked about the difficulty of that in a hybrid program, um, and having to actually self-motivate and push yourself through it.

P1 I3: In all honesty I would feel okay with it, um, I did my Masters in a hybrid program, I am not a traditional brick and mortar student and I think I would have been miserable, um, I work well independently, I self-motivate perfectly fine, um, so, for me the hybrid worked. I think I would have, as opposed to the friend that I described, I would had issues had I been in a brick and mortar where I would have been limited by questions. I get frustrated in a classroom when people haven't read the work and classroom time is taken-up on things that were given out in homework assignments and class assignments that should have been completed already. So, I don't have the patience for the traditional brick and mortar. So a hybrid actually really is my preferred modality and it's my preferred area that I want to actually teach in.

P2 I3: First of all, my philosophical thinking of education had impacted the way I was thinking. I was validating brick and mortar education face-to-face, having the professor in front of me and I came into the program doubting that this was for me. I did it because it was convenient, because I am not a traditional student..."I said let me give it a try." So this University is CACREP approved and it has the Ph.D. program that I am looking for, "let me give it a try." But in the back of my mind, it was present...how am I going to gain the experience if this is online?" "I'm just writing papers on the computer, how do they know that I'm the one writing them?" "How do they know that I'm not plagiarizing somebody?" So, all those questions were in my mind when I came into the cyber program. To my surprise, everything is scrutinized so well that even my own writing is being detected by technology.

P3 I1: I guess my experience has been a mixture of like good and bad...good just because, you know with a hybrid program it does give you a lot of opportunities to, you know continue in school while you're working and all your other life stuff, you know, also it, it gives you all this information... the bad thing is you now with...especially my school where most of it is on just like a Blackboard forum discussion kind of, you know...asynchronous kind of communication there's no face-to-face or anything.

P3 I3: its because they're not willing to make the sacrifices or see what is really entailed in like a hybrid program, it's a lot of stuff, it's not going to a classroom two days a week; it's five days a week of discussions, phone conferences, Skype, residencies where you have to go for a week, two weeks in person in some other state that's a lot of stuff for a lot of people. But for me, I was just able to, I guess, I don't know what the word I'm looking for like, set my priorities and make the sacrifices that I need to compensate and be able to relax and, you know, push forward and make it through the entire program.

P3 I3: And then, you know, there is the other component of hybrid where it's like the face-to-face or the residencies or the phone conferences which also, you know, kind of connects you to the program more. And because, if you're just doing it online with the forum discussions and turning in papers, there is a huge disconnect for me... okay, yea, there's other students, but they're just names, you know, they're just words on the

webpage, like, there's no connection. But, when you throw that other component, the face-to-face and the real time and all that, it definitely gets you more invested, it got me more invested and excited about the program and a sense of connection with others.

P4 P1: Well, all of it's all online, except for the residency and the, class counseling, a, internships. So, I was able to...make friends online with people ...and connect and call each other and talk about assignments and...which I found, online was easier to do, then when you're in a traditional setting. In the traditional setting, everybody has their own...little friendships and stuff. So, it's not fun to break into...meeting other people, I would say I mean you meet them cause you're in class with them... but online you know, you can call-em up and talk and you talk about the assignments and you brainstorm and, and I, and I liked that, it was a great experience.

P4 I3: they were always willing to answer a question and help you out and give you information. It wasn't, I found that with the hybrid, the online counseling, the teachers had more time maybe, you know, to give information. You could ask a question and get it answered. When you're in a classroom setting, you know, there's fifty people and there just isn't that available time.

P5 I1: so in this it was oh this is a great program I don't have to, you know, move away across the country, I don't have upheave my husband, and my life ...

P5 I1: Well it's so diff, it, it's, without a frame of reference, I mean, you, you know it felt very different than what I would image a land based, um, Ph.D. process would have been like... Yeah, and was that really supposed to be part of, or did they just forget that piece, or um, you know, what would it have been like to have been in a Ph.D. program with only 5 people in the cohort and these warm fuzzy faculty member that you could pop in and visit and you know...

P5 I3: there's the whole part where you get to keep your real life and the benefits of a hybrid program for being able to live where you live and so what you do and have that fit into your life... I mean, I watched colleagues going on huge overseas trips and having babies and having surgeries and getting jobs and moving across the country and doing all of these, you know, remarkable life events and still being able to continue in this process, that wouldn't have been the same if they'd been in a non-hybrid program. So, the flexibility that this kind of program gives us, you know, I think far outweighs some of the challenges,

P6 I1: the online environment creates, you know you become, again good writers and good scholarship but, the lack of emotional interaction, the lack of collegial sort of ah...I'm just bantering, just being in the physical presence of, somebody I think has been the greatest hindrance because you can't...

P6 I3: Yea, I think in a hybrid program, especially the online elements, you don't get a daily interaction, you don't have that face-to-face mentor that you see every day, you don't have someone really holding your hand. And not that all doc programs do that, but you just don't have some of those day to day allegiances and where someone is going to truly mentor you... and so it has to be more intrinsic in origin as far as what compels you.

Um, and so that's when you just have to rely upon, you know, your end goal and your results. And don't get that, probably, as much as a brick and mortar as you, you probably don't get that as much as you would if you were in a brick and mortar.

P7 I1: I think that there is a certain expectation that goes with entering a doctoral program and I think , um, given the nature of online learning and hybrid learning and maybe kind of the historical stigma surrounding the same, I think that there is kind of this implicit...um, fear that other people will not take our degrees as seriously or...will not back them

P7 I3: Because I don't have experience in other doctoral programs, I'm not sure what a traditional doctoral program is like and in terms of that, I can say that I've done some of my own, you know, some of my own, um, research on online learning and I know that that's, that need to kind of actively participate in your education is key to having a satisfactory experience.

P9 I1: I think some of it is not being able to practice everything , so like I know in ah, more traditional program we would have access to, like the masters students or other undergrad courses that we could be teaching, just more opportunities to be doing the work already. I think not being on the, a, campus and access to stuff like that...

P9 I3: P9: Yea, I think is some way it was really helpful and then I wonder sometimes if in other ways it was limiting it. So it was really helpful because, um, I was able to fit the program into my life. So, had it not been a hybrid program, I wouldn't be in one at all. So there's that fact, it allowed me to continue to do the work that I do and live where I live with my husband and keep my life intact while still really working on something important and getting through this whole process. And then the accessibility has been really helpful, I can just jump on Adobe or e-mail or whatever it is to talk to my advisor or meet up with groups of people who are in different time zones on Adobe, kind of at home in my pajamas has been really helpful... I wonder sometimes though, whether a hybrid program is, um, sometime I think maybe it's kind of off to the side, it's not totally integrated into my real life, because it's just at home on my computer sometimes... it's not people that I interact with on a regular basis or that my day to day friends have ever met, like they would have when I was in a face-to-face Masters program. So then I wonder if the process took longer to integrate into my day to day reality then it would have had I gone into like a face-to-face program.

### **Describing Self Going into Hybrid Program**

Participants entered their respective hybrid programs with varying descriptions of their experience, professional identity, and personal characteristics. Having experience has been defined as experience related to teaching, supervising, leadership and conducting research, which again are typically considered aspects of being a CES.. Participants

ranged from having no experience, to having significant experience specifically with teaching and supervising. Participants also expressed having significant variation with their professional identity entering the hybrid doctoral program. This variation included not having an established professional identity to having a singular identity such as a counselor, clinician, school counselor or addictions counselor, to having a CES professional identity already starting to form based on previous doctoral work and prior CES experience. Further, participants also expressed having personal characteristics prior to entering the program that aided them in moving successfully through their hybrid doctoral program, and as their professional identity evolved. These aspects of each participant were considered Context, in that they served as the background, or framework as each participant experienced their professional identity development as a CES. Based on this context, each participant's experience was different. Those who had a lot of CES experiences prior to entering the program, experienced less of a learning curve and had less angst with their identity development in relations to those tasks and as such their CES identity was already beginning to form before their doctoral program. Those who had a strong clinician/counselor identity considered their initial identity as the framework, foundation or base for their evolving CES identity. Lastly, participants expressed that having certain personal characteristics entering the program were important to have as they navigated through their hybrid program and in developing their professional identity. This property was broken down into three dimensions related to prior experience, identity and personal characteristics.

**Dimension: Having little experience – Having significant experience.**

Participants expressed having a variety of experience prior to entering the program.

While all participants had significant counseling or clinical experience and were licensed in their respective state, each participant had varying experience related to being a CES.

Two of the participants had significant supervision and teaching experience. This experience aided in their identity development, in that they already had considerable confidence in these two areas. One participant expressed having some supervision experience and leadership experience in professional organizations prior to entering the hybrid program. Two other participants had transferrable experience in the form of training and religious instruction. The remaining four participants stated that prior to entering the program they did not have any direct experience in what would be normally thought of as being CES tasks; teaching, supervising, leadership and research. This experience, or lack of experience, directly impacted the identity development process for each participant. Participants who had prior experience with teaching or supervising seemed to have a little less anxiety and challenge with their identity development related to those specific tasks, in that they already had a degree of mastery established.

Participants who had no previous experience with these tasks generally associated with being a CES seemed to have a greater degree of anxiety and uncertainty as they learned and tried those new tasks out, which impacted their confidence, which impacted their identity development. In contrast, many of these participants who did not have prior CES experience also indicated that because of the lack of experience, they felt more open to the learning that was occurring.

This dimension interacts and/or impacts the dimensions within the category of Evolving Sense of Professional Identity, both Growing Confidence and Changing Identity. It

seemed progressively the more experience a participant had previously with either teaching, supervising or previous doctoral work, the more confidence they seemed to have. Further it seemed that it was in the areas that there was no experience that the participant's experiences the most anxiety about. This dimension also impacts the dimension Helping Identity Development – Hindering Identity Development under the Receiving Feedback property in that if a participant already had the confidence in one aspect of being a CES, or if they had prior experience in a CES Task, receiving feedback was less important to the process. If they had no experience then feedback was more important.

Lastly this dimension impacted dimension of Engaging in a New Task – Engaging in a Task Where Some Mastery is Present. The more experience the participants had with CES tasks the less important those same tasks were in performing.

P1 I3: I had taught before, but not counseling and so I think we talked about this before, so I wondered if I would be able to teach counseling the way I was able to teach the other topics that I had taught... I had experience already as an educator but I just wasn't a counselor educator. So, it wasn't hard to grasp that identity as a counselor educator, it actually, because I had experience as an educator, it probably made it easier for me to say "I can do this"

P2 I3: I did an honor project for my graduation, which was a clinical trial, quantitative in nature. I developed a program for time management and procrastination. In that program I used a sampling of students within the psychology courses and they were all freshman...in how to manage their time. So that project itself gave me two things: One, teaching and disseminating information and training and the other one was the research piece.

P3 I3: I think not having experience and not having anyone explain those different roles that as a counselor we're suppose, we should take interest in research and in advocacy for our self and all those different kinds of roles, I didn't have any of those back when I was a starting counselor and nobody really emphasized them either and I think at, you know, that was something that I didn't really think was going to have an impact on me until I started going through the Ph.D. Program and really finding out what entails to be like a Counselor Educator, Supervisor

P4 I3: I do because I supervised before I went into the program and I had many leadership roles before, I think my supervision and my leadership qualities improved, they got better.

P5 I3: Well I think the fact that I hadn't had any real experience with supervision or teaching, um, possibly made me more open to the experience, because I didn't have a whole lot of preconceived ideas about how I should show-up in any of those roles beyond the clinician role that I came in with. So, in a sense, my previous experiences potentially weren't as limiting as if I had a whole lot more experience or more of a concept of who I was in those realms.

P6 I1: I had a previous doc program that, um, that I went through was all, wh, I just didn't finish my dissertation, um, so that kind of added to my counselor id, my professional identity as a counselor and then I've also really enjoyed presenting and teaching in a Masters counseling programs, so pretty early on I felt pretty strongly about the identity of the, my identity as a counselor primarily through teaching and presenting and then my, my earlier doc work...

P6 I2: I can't remember now if it was my, you know, sort of overt decision or a result of being asked to take on a different type of leadership role in the agency that I was working under that required me moving towards getting a supervisory credential in the State of XXXXX. So I think, it was always something I always looked for, but I wasn't in a rush, then was asked to be in a supervisory role at my agency that I was working at. As far as a Counselor Educator, I have to chalk that up to fate too, at least early on, that I was asked to co-teach only a year or two after my Masters program at XXXXX University. I was asked to co-teach with a colleague/friend who asked me to be an instructor in his practicum course and then I just sort of loved it. So I don't think it was ever delineated necessarily or this distinct thought like, "oh, I can do this, I want to do it", it was more like I was asked to do it and I liked it, and then I just ran with it.

P6 I3: probably ten years prior to entering the hybrid program I started teaching adjunct... I also did a lot of supervision, but at the same time supervision wasn't nearly as rewarding or as motivating to me, um, it was just kind of part of my clinical, part of my clinical work. The teaching was unique, it was more dynamic and it was something that I always enjoyed doing, so that was a big part of it.

P7 I2: I was already a very active clinical supervisor before I entered the program... I think the major, I mean there were definitely differences in leaving the clinic and going fulltime teaching. I had been teaching for so long, but I was doing them both,

P7 I3: when I entered the program I had a run a mental health clinic, previous to entering it, and when I joined my cohort for the first time I realized that there was a great variety of professionals in our cohort, um, but none of them really had the type of clinical experience that I had and none of them, or maybe one or two of them, had some significant teaching experience...so I walked in and realized, wow, I'm not as far as behind in practical experience as I thought I was

P9 I1: so I think before I started the doc. program, my identity was very much, just a counselor. So, I hadn't done any supervision, I had really never taught anything, any training that I had done was, you know, pretty like, on a peer level.

P9 I3: I realized I was doing some, you know, I've been doing trainings or I was an outdoor educator for a little while, um, and I was a substitute teacher for a little while. So, I had some of these other experiences that were transferable to my identity as a counselor educator, but I had kind of discounted them prior to going into the program; thinking like that's not relevant because I wasn't in the field doing supervision or research or those kind of things. But I have done a lot of stuff that was relevant I just didn't really acknowledge that or knew it yet.

**Dimension: Having no identity – having the beginnings of a CES identity.**

Participants had a wide range in this particular dimension. Most of the participants stated that their identity was singular, meaning a counselor, a clinician, a school counselor or an addictions counselor. Very little elaboration was given, other than the type of population they may have served and a few mentioned their theoretical orientation, but in general the identity described was very singular. One participant stated that she did not think she had much of an identity when she started the program because her Masters program did not emphasize it. However this same participant also had a lot of teaching and supervising experience under her belt. Another participant had been in a previous doctoral program and had a lot of teaching and supervising. When both of these participants described their identity, it sounded as if they had already started forming a CES identity prior to entering their hybrid doctoral program. Interestingly, the participant who did not think she had a professional identity prior to entering the program, seemed to substitute her significant experiences as a way of developing her CES identity.

It should also be noted that participants felt that their initial identity that they held coming into the program was thought to enhance, serve as a foundation, basis, and framework for the evolving identity as a CES.

This dimension interacts with several other dimensions. The first property it impacts is Growing Confidence. Those coming into the program that had a singular identity seemed to have experienced more anxiety with their identity development process. Participants who had an identity that was already forming into a CES, seemed to have more confidence, are at least gained confidence more quickly in the initial stages of their hybrid program.

This dimension also impacted the dimension of Changing Identity in that participants described their changes often times in terms of the tasks or roles that they were fulfilling, for example if they were teaching then their teaching identity was changing. However if a participant already had teaching experience, less emphasis would be placed on teaching because that identity was already forming, and emphasis would be placed in an area that was not as developed such as research. The dimension of Receiving Positive Feedback – Receiving Constructive or No Feedback under the Receiving Feedback property is also impacted by this dimension. Feedback seems more important in areas of the identity that the participant did not have confidence with. These were typically areas where there was little, if any experience or mastery.

P1 I1: I would uh identify my professional identity before as, as a counselor, uh not a counselor educator, but just as a counselor, uh as a counselor, even with supervision responsibilities, but um I identified as a counselor.

P2 I1: Before entering my, um doctoral program, my professional identity, uh, was Rogerian in nature and very humanistic, um, very person centered, very student centered, supervisee centered, uh so, I work with what the client brings me,

P2 I3: So I have found that having both, has strengthened my identity. (Having both a counselor and CES identity – compatible)

P3 I1: before my doctoral program, I think that I pretty much just aligned myself with just, being like a substance abuse counselor, cause that's where all my, you know like

previous training was, so I kinda, um, like thought of myself as just a counselor nothing more nothing less.

P3 I3: Well, you know I think of my old identity, before, you know, and I always think of like my old identity and like my current identity just being separated by simply like my Ph.D. Program. That's kind of like a reference point that you kind of want from me or, you know... I was just a counselor and now I feel like I am more well-rounded educator, supervisor and counselor. I think my experiences from my developmental years, when I just identified myself as a counselor role, kind of like fit into my new role, just because I can apply all the stuff that I'm learning now to how the current system is. You know, my experiences from the mental health agency that I came from, I already know how that system works and what it lacks and what it doesn't lack and you know that is all my old identity and with my new identity, I have all the other aspects of you know the Counselor Educator and Supervisor. So it always gives me like a frame of, like a point of view as to how I can influence the profession when I'm done. You know it kind of is the starting foundation for my long term goals, the goal that drove me into, you know, the Ph.D. Program.

P4 I1: my professional identity before entering the Ph.D. program, was um...kind of mixed... and got my Masters degree in 2000 and I got licensed as a therapist in 2003 and then I went into private practice in, like, 2005.

P4 I3: My previous identity with the one I have now...I would say that they were very closely related, once again, because of the aspect of teaching that you do. I think that every person might be unaware, but everybody teaches somebody something.

P5 I1: A clinician..., very much a practicing clinician private practice with dual licensure wanting to work more in, a forensic, world... Working with individuals, couples and families, um, oh this, ah, this is hard, doing, you know doing counseling but none of the, other pieces of...identity that I now hold.

P5 I3: So my identity coming into the program was pure and simply a clinician, I saw myself as a marriage and family therapist in private practice and that was pretty much the entirety of my professional identity at that point and time... I think it actually hindered it to some degree, because I hadn't entered the program wanting to be a counselor educator, I wanted to be just a more respected, more initialed private practice therapist. And so I hadn't really expanded my opportunities or my ability to think of myself in the world of being a counselor educator or supervisor and I'd really bypassed that as a consideration early on in the program...The clinician identity, um, I believe that it fit and continues to fit very well. I believe the richer someone's experience as practicing clinician is, the richer their contribution to supervision and to teaching can be

P6 I1: I had a previous doc program that, um, that I went through was all, wh, I just didn't finish my dissertation, um, so that kind of added to my counselor id , my professional identity as a counselor and then I've also really enjoyed presenting and teaching in a Masters counseling programs... I was identifying primarily with a counselor and I, and I even teach as a counselor who likes to teach, not as a counselor educator...

P6 I2: because I taught for four or five years prior to my first Doc program, thinking that maybe I'll pursue a Doc, a CES degree, but not having definitive plans, I started teaching and supervising well before that.

P6 I3: I think it is only, I hope, that it is only enhanced. Um, it, what my doc program has made me realize more is that there is several facets and I knew this, but as an adjunct, you just, your job is simply to teach, you know, to teach, grade some papers do a little this and that. But as, um, in my doc program, in my new identity, my emerging identity, more as a, as a, I guess a well-rounded scholar, because of three elements of counselor education, the teaching piece, um, the research and the writing. Um, and so I think my new identity is so much more well-formed, um, but my old identity is so much well formed into my new identity that by being a just more rounded counselor educator, I guess.

P7 I1: I don't think I had much of a professional identity before joining the program. Um, I worked in community mental health and my attitude was really kind of, adjust to whatever my client's needs were, um, so I never spent a lot of time engaging in a lot of self-reflection regarding my professional identity.

P7 I2: I was already a very active clinical supervisor before I entered the program...

P7 I3: P7: So, I think prior to entering the program, I never really reflected on what it meant to have a professional identity... I really didn't have a defined identity at all, it was just kind of a particular work ethic and expectations placed upon me...due to state law and federal regulations and stuff like that. When I entered the program that was the first time that I really thought about professional identity and the fact that I kind of had a little bit control over who I am as a professional.

P8 I1: my counselor identity would have been as a school counselor, particularly as an elementary school counselor.

P8 I3: Yes, they do, um...again I see it as sort of layers (referencing her initial identity and her CES identity)... The School Counselor is directly in-touch with the students, the parents and teachers and all of that in the school building whereas, the Counselor Educator is training the would be School Counselors to go out to school buildings and work with those people. So, they're definitely related to each other and if I had not been a School Counselor, I'm sure that I would not even begin to know how to tell somebody else the things that might work or not work.

P9 I1: so I think before I started the doc. program, my identity was very much, just a counselor. So, I hadn't done any supervision, I had really never taught anything, any training that I had done was, you know, pretty like, on a peer level. Um, so I would say it was much more that like a children's counselor and really no identity as far as the other kind of roles that I've taken on since then

P9 I3: I was identifying as a clinician before I came into the program, so, just a really strong identity as a professional counselor and of course that's all part of who I am and that helps me, I think, be a better counselor educator, supervisor, researcher, anything...because for me, that's really the base of where it all comes from. So, and I've

really gotten to grow that piece of it to, but having it before I came in, it just really, it's been an essential part, I think. So that fact that it was already there was really helpful and it was the real source of strength that I drew from all this time and added on to. It was kind of my lens for looking at everything too.

**Dimension: Being laid back – Being resilient.**

Part of the experience each participant had was drawing on personal characteristics that they had prior to entering the program and a mechanism continue through their hybrid doctoral program and their professional identity development. Through each of the data collection stages participants described a variety of personal characteristics, such as ability to have fun with the process, being laid back, being a quick learner, being tenacious, stubbornness, having good people skills, being self-motivated, having perseverance, determination, and being resilient. By having these characteristics prior to entering the program, helped participants not quit or take a break when they were tired or frustrated. Several participants cited that they had witnessed other individuals not make it through a hybrid program because they did not possess some of these characteristics.

This dimension does not directly affect other dimensions, but indirectly affects them all. Without these characteristics, participants might have discontinued their program and would not have had a chance at developing their identity further.

P1 I2: cause normally I would tell you I'm a people person, but when it came to the hybrid program that didn't translate very well, because I'm a hands on people person, so if I come into an organization, I um, I come into that organization and I meet people and I interact with them and I build, I build those relationships...I am the relationship builder it kinda, it kinda doesn't translate as well in my hybrid program, so but um, but I try to utilize that in my, I don't even know if this all makes sense, but anyways and so I try to build those, build relationships with the people who, who I knew I would, our paths would intertwine throughout, not just the program, but throughout this profession because they are counselor educators, they are, you know you will see these same people at

conferences and things like that, so um, it would be that relationship building piece that, that I kind of pride myself on

P1 I3: It really has to be being resilient, um, because it just takes so much, beyond concentration and commitment, you've got to be able to take constructive criticism, um, you've got to be able to press through on the hardest days, you've got to be able to work through the...you've got to be a self-motivator because it is a hybrid program. Um, so, I think resilient is probably like the best word to describe what is necessary, resilience, being able to just press through no matter what, is really a good term to coin what is necessary to make it... if you don't motivate yourself, you don't have a professor saying you didn't turn this in or, you know, this is necessary or whatever, but, you know, you have to be the one that makes sure that you complete it, it really falls on the student... I've seen several people, colleagues and peers that didn't make it and that part of it is they didn't have the resilience to make it...they didn't have what it really took, they weren't self-motivated or they got distracted, they couldn't get back on course and I think it has a lot to do with up-bringing. I'm not saying that there's something that you can't acquire later, um, I'm just, I just believe that, you know, it seems that you develop over the years.

P2 I2: my skills that help me navigate into this is that I'm a forever learner, I learn quick...listen active-listen to what other people are telling me, the advice of they are telling me, I am, ah, I do so much research for everything I do...research is not only to school and probably that is the characteristic that has helped me. I don't believe what people tell me firsthand, I dig a little bit more after I finish to find out if that is true. Um, so probably navigating through the university online and clicking on every link and reading everything helped me be successful in this program.

P2 I3: Resilient is a great term to use as a descriptor for my success in this program... It's not a face-to-face, oh I like this person, this is a good student, I like her participation, no, cyber is different. Cyber is, you have to present yourself, you have to portray yourself in your writing. So that was the biggest challenge and the one that I had to use to bounce back to be resilient, that is by failing this assignment let me take this assignment and the feedback that I received here to improve my next one and then I took the feedback of that one and incorporated it into the next one and so forth and so on. That's where I see and I can apply resilience in learning in the cyber learning environment. Does that make sense?

P3 I2: P3: I think the biggest characteristic, um I don't know how really to phrase it, I guess maybe my like being laid back... Like more relaxed because, you know, I found that other students who are very rigid and set in there ways and cannot really adapt to different situations or different teachers or different policies and all, had a real rough time really accepting whatever the challenge was.

P3 I3: So, after a while, a lot of people started dropping out just because, I mean they're exhausted and, you know, I think my resilience really carried me through because I'm very, like, goal orientated and when I had my mind on it, I knew I was, you know, I had to continue on, that, you know, something had to give so I would, you know, cut back on work or, you know, I knew had, I would have to sacrifice some things in order to just keep on going. And I really think that that's my resilience that that's, you know,

something that most people don't have that a lot of them that just kind of get burnt-out or drop-out or can't continue, its because they're not willing to make the sacrifices or see what is really entailed in like a hybrid program, it's a lot of stuff, it's not going to a classroom two days a week; it's five days a week of discussions, phone conferences, Skype, residencies where you have to go for a week, two weeks in person in some other state that's a lot of stuff for a lot of people. But for me, I was just able to, I guess, I don't know what the word I'm looking for like, set my priorities and make the sacrifices that I need to compensate and be able to relax and, you know, push forward and make it through the entire program... it has always just been one of my like, personality characteristics, you know, I'm not very rigid in rules, I'm not very anxious about deadlines or, um, mandates or, you know those things really don't intimidate me they just, you know, part of the process for me.

P4 I2: one of the characteristics that I have , that multiple clients and colleagues have told me, is that I'm easy to talk to I listen, um, and I'm friendly, I'm approachable...there you go.

P5 I2: Well I think, certainly, that being older was also helpful in not getting, not sweating the details sometimes... where, you know, there were all kinds of undercurrents and, you know, I don't know, just stuff that would...anytime you bring a group of people together there's stuff that comes out, so being able to stay apolitical, um, I think was an advantage that I had in that I really just wanted to show up and learn and be in support of anyone and everyone in the cohort as far as moving through the program.

P5 I3: So resilience I think is a perfect word for what it takes to especially go through a hybrid program where there is little to no nurturing coming from the faculty and, um, just internal drive that has to get us through the whole process.

P6 I2: Well, I think that in a hybrid program you have to be a least moderately self-motivated and determined. I mean you have to want to finish, I think that's probably in any Doc program. In the hybrid program, because of the relative isolation, you have to have an intrinsic motivation, you can't rely upon others externally to, you know, "let's do this, hang-in-there, keep going," that has to come intrinsically and I think moderately, because I don't want to come across nor identify myself as an exceptionally motivated person, you know. I think one of my characteristics that I need to keep working on in pursuit of self-improvement is to be more intrinsically motivated. But, I think you have to be minimally motivated, um, you have to be determined, um, I think you have to, um, be disciplined to check-in every day, to have those moments to do that discussion post when it's ten o'clock at night and it's the last thing in this world that you want to do.

P6 I3: Yea, I would say, yes it absolutely has, although I don't, I wouldn't attribute resilience to me, I think a more accurate term would just be "persistence." Um, because it wasn't, resilience, to me, I see resilience as being, you know, we have to be willing to fend off external or outside stressors or attack. Um, and I don't sense those. The challenges of a hybrid program is all internal, it's all within myself. So I think the better term for me might be more persistent, you just have to plug away, there's not a whole lot of external motivators, either way. There's not a whole lot of things that say you can't do this, don't do this, there's not egos, there's not clicks, I mean there's just not a whole lot

of that it's all coming from more internal. And so I think that persistent, having, say, plugging away at it, you know, hanging in there, is the term that I would use, because I think that's so much more important than resilience.

P7 I2: I think probably the most significant personality traits or whatever... I am kind of "type A," I am very organized; I like to have tasks that I can check off. I am pretty organized and pretty motivated, I think that they're all really crucial in the hybrid program... being motivated and being okay being independent and not being very clicky, I think that was all very much a strength... being willing to advocate for myself and being motivated were kind of the key elements for my success.

P7 I3: I think resilience is definitely one component... I think, you know, resilience, in terms of kind of bouncing back and recovering from that frustration would be a good summary of my experience...in my mind...determination was huge as well.

P8 I2: the one personal characteristic that I learned more about as I went through this was, um, the need to finish, the need to do it now, um, go ahead and be done with it.

P8 I3: there's some resiliency in, it's not, it's not defeat along the way, but it just this road keeps going and going and going... it has to, so that you get to the end of the road, you're like that Energizer Bunny that just has to keep going. So I think there's some resilience in that even though my tasks continue, I have to keep going if I'm going to reach that goal that I've set for myself.

P9 I2: I think I'm really, um, my first instincts are like stubborn and tenacious... but I used that to get through the program, because there are so many barriers and it's so difficult like, why not quit at any point and time? There's a whole lot of other things that I could do with my time and money or whatever, you know, I kind of have to be a little bit committed to it to get through. Um, and I think that that's been helpful, overall, even though, I don't know, right off the bat it sounds like a positive characteristic, I think that it is so there is that and tenacity of course, just to keep sticking with it.

P9 I3: P9: I think resiliency is certainly part of the process, because, I mean as you know, the program is difficult, there's plenty of points where I wanted to quit or where I felt like maybe it was too much where maybe I need to take a break or something like that, just cause it's a lot especially to combine with full time work and life and all that. Um, so that was certainly there, um, as far as how it directly impacted professional development, yea, I mean there were sometimes where feedback was difficult to accept or maybe harshly given amongst a cohort or just some interesting experiences that our cohort had with communication and relationship building that if resiliency weren't part of it, it would have made it a lot more difficult.

### **Learning How to Be a CES**

Learning to be a Counselor Educator and Supervisor involves learning new information from course content, engaging in experiential learning activities associated with being a CES. Tasks associated with being a CES are teaching, supervising, leadership, and

scholarship. These activities occur as part of the program requirements (practicum and internship) and outside of program requirements. Additionally other learning occurs vicariously by observing faculty, other CES, and peers. It is a combination of these various learning opportunities that appear to move the participants forward in their PID. This category is very interrelated with Connecting with Other. It is through connecting with others and receiving feedback about progress with CES tasks that lead participants grow more confident and to continue to evolve their identity as a CES.

### **Engaging in Conceptual Learning (Coursework)**

Conceptual learning includes reading and writing assignments that would be typically required as part of the coursework. Conceptual learning about the history of the counseling profession, gave several participants an understanding of how far the profession has come and a sense pride. A few participants cited that just being in the program made them feel more like a CES. A few participants cited that there were assignments that helped them make greater meaning of the counseling profession and of what it means to be a CES. Many participants cited the focus on identity development in the curriculum helped them process their own professional identity as they evolved into CES.

**Dimension: Doing assignments – making meaning of assignments.** This dimension represents the range of how participant engage in conceptual learning. Participants indicated that they engaged in the course work by reading material and completing assignments. Not much emphasis was placed on the actual conceptual learning. Some participants reflected on the actual assignments given and placed it within the context of

what they were doing. They made meaning of the course work and saw how what was being learned could be applied to their work as future CES.

This dimension directly impacts the dimension of experiential learning, as much of what is learned in the classroom, the participants now have an opportunity apply new knowledge. If participants have already been making meaning of the assignments, then experiential learning is a smoother transition.

This dimension also impacts Feeling like an imposter – Feeling confident. Participants stated that doing the course work made them already feel like a CES.

P2 I3: The most, or the area that I have invested, thousands of hours, is becoming familiar and making the APA manual my own. I have invested more time in the APA manual to be successful in this program than I have in reading literature or articles or text books.

P3 I1: when I started, like with my Ph.D. program...just like within the first few semesters, it made me feel like counselor, and a counselor educator and counselor supervisor but, like all of it together was a much more complex and...like esteemed profession...

P3 I1: I attribute that to the program, I mean that helped my Identity a lot just because, you know, it, it gave me all that background information, you know and like current information and more in-depth ...you know, there was, there's a lot of focus and a lot of the program work on what it is to be a counselor and, you know, a counselor educator and, you know a supervisor, how all those roles, you know, play with each other play, you know, in the profession so a lot of that like really helped give me a grounding for what I'm supposed to be, now and in the future ...

P3 I2: I think the first time that I really felt that I could be a CES was actually in one of my research classes where it was the quantitative research methods, yea it was the quantitative and all the statistics and all of that

P3 I2: And so the professor was talking about how when you're working on your documents, like your prospectus and you're turning-it-in, that each time you turn-it-in that you need to like kind of really revise it, it was like for this one course that the whole course was prepping you for writing your research and, you know, that kind of stuff.

P3 I2: Well, actually, um, you know in the program, I forget what course it was, but it was really about like becoming a leader in the field and you know a role model and kind of a guiding person in the profession and you know it like spanned an entire semester a couple of courses all dealing with this leadership role that everyone has and it really didn't click with me. Like okay, I guess, I am supposed to be a leader and as a supervisor or whatnot and then three years later I became part of a local organization, the XXXXX, there's like three hundred members in it... Well, somehow, I'm not even quite sure what motivated me to like run for a board position, but I became like a secretary of this board. And then a year later, like now, I'm the vice president of a board. And all the stuff that I really learned early on in the program, when it really didn't apply to me all makes sense now I'm in an actual like leadership position.

P4 I1: learning about the different teaching techniques and, the curriculum was absolutely wonderful, and all the professors are great, they're really very helpful, willing to work with you. It, it's just a really nice...feeling I liked it, it was good.

P4 I1: In all of the courses there usually was, some form of an assignment where you explored how your professional identity ...in one of the examples that comes to mind, one, one of the beginning classes was, to um, reflect on a teacher, throughout your life that had the most influence on you and how that impacted, had that influence on you and, you know, basically how you got to where you are...

P5 I2: I didn't know anything about higher ed., how higher ed. functioned, what it was to move through that process...even simple things like what's the difference between an associate or an assistant professor, what does it mean to be "tenured" and different types of possibilities that were out there,

P7 I1: the doctoral program was the first time I had ever really been asked to reflect upon my professional identity, um, and there were, you know, a couple of times within the classroom that we were given the opportunity to speak up and give our perspective on various issues, but, I think what contributed most to my professional identity throughout the program were some really, really well-crafted assignments that um, really implored me to utilize some of the theories that we had discussed in class and really apply them to my own practice and how I would do things. So, for example; ah, one assignment that I remember completing was a clin, clinician disclosure and supervisor disclosure and while I had done those for my professional work in the past, I never spent a lot of time really thinking about theories and just the fact that it was an academic assignment. We had to provide references throughout our disclosure, so it was really the first time that I, um, was very, very thoughtful about how theory applied to my practice...

P7 I3: for example, on one of the assignments that really, I kind of remember really well, we had to do a supervisor disclosure and that to me, well kind of a complex assignment,

came really instinctively to me, it wasn't difficult at all, it was like oh, well duh, I do this, this, this and this and this related to that theory and that's why this is important and it was a very fluid assignment for me to complete. Again, I had never thought about coming up with this document because I wasn't doing formal supervision outside of an agency prior to that, um, but it wasn't difficult.

P7 I3: I think I was a little bit more open to really considering the different theories and concepts that we learned, but and I was able to really apply them to my real world experience, where some of my cohort members seemed to struggle with that a little bit. So, because I was able to apply different theories, they made a little bit more sense to me and I was really able to kind of think about, okay how does this theory of whatever, um, apply to what I've done and is this useful to me and does this fit with what I know is myself as a professional.

P9 I1: And then that's when I really start thinking about like okay, "how is what I am doing now...going to impact me in the future" whether it's you know, an assignment creating a lesson plan or a syllabus or whatever, that is a real life assignment because it's not something I just have to do this week to jump through a hoop, it's something that I really want to do. So it helps to take it outside of the context, I think, of what I am doing.

P9 I1: then the rest of it was like when I was actually learning stuff, so through the course work, I felt like I was picking up stuff that would be useful ...and now I have on the horizon actually teaching and I have supervised some masters students as part of their practicum and internship and...um, so learning more about, being a (inaudible). It's been helpful and just the general how to of it.

P9 I1: I think I took the counselor education course in the fall, so that was kind of the beginning of my second year, and that was for sure a big turning point when I realized like oh, I have a lot of these skills that I already needed and I have a lot of really good ideas about stuff that I could do in courses with students that are...you know, as good as anyone else's ideas...

### **Engaging in Experiential Learning (CES Tasks)**

CES tasks are defined as teaching, supervising, presenting, leadership and conducting research and taking on leadership roles. These activities could be part of course requirements, such as with practicum and with internship, or outside of program requirements. Participants indicated that by doing these tasks they were able to apply conceptual knowledge and skills they observed others doing such as peers and faculty,

and it also gave them a sense of being a CES. Receiving feedback was also directly linked to this property, in that receiving feedback, formal or informal, helped build the confidence in the participants when these tasks were new experiences. This confidence was critical in engaging in further CES tasks and moving the participants forward in their PID.

**Dimension: Engaging in a new task – engaging in a task where some mastery is present.** This dimension represents participants engaging in CES tasks that are new experiences to them and CES tasks that have been previously performed. Several participants only had clinical experience coming into their hybrid program. The learning how to teach, supervise, participate in leadership with in the professional community and how to conduct research held a steeper learning curve for those who had no experience in these areas. A couple of participants entered the program with significant teaching at a college/university level teaching in a Masters level counseling program and supervision experience. Participants would experience more anxiety and self-doubt with tasks that were new to them, while those tasks that have been performed before, participants were be more confident with.

This dimension is reciprocal with the dimension in Receiving feedback; Receiving Positive Feedback – Receiving Constructive or No Feedback. If tasks were new, more helping feedback is needed, if tasks have been performed before and confidence has been built, less feedback is needed.

P1 I1: Working as an instructor through my internships and things like that I, I really began to um associate more with counselor educators being more of a counselor educator and I think my whole uh I'm geared more toward the counselor educator, as opposed to

just a counselor, um it's something that I know that I really want to do full time and I'm, I'm doing everything in my power to get there...

P1 I2: I just finished developing a teaching platform for them on how to deal with integrate or bring in churches and educate them on hospice and palliative care, so opened up an area for me to be able to offer something to them

P1 I3: I became the person that finished-up everybody else's work when they, at the end of the term or the quarter or whatever they will, um, they'll send out a note if there's a professor or somebody who's gotten behind or got sick or something like that to see if anybody can help grade papers, things like that. I became the person who responded to a lot of those e-mails and I graded papers for others and even the feedback from them like

P2 I2: In order to do that I had to go and attend a class and teach back that and all that good stuff for the state on the training of trainers event. When they feel like me to train something that was developed by the state, they bring me in, they teach me the course for one week, the last day I have to teach back for one hour to the engineers and they will qualify me or disqualify me from teaching that course. So that has been a huge contributor to my identity... In the way that when I present information that I have not researched, that is not developed by me, but it was taught by me with the complete curriculum. So I was not, um, familiar with the resources, I became familiar with the syllabus, I became familiar with the curriculum.

P3 I3: now that I have some supervisees, I try to teach them the same kind of skill, or to practice the same kind of characteristic, you know, they all focus on licensure and what they have to do and all the requirements and how long it's going to take and all that and I'm just like "break it down to small obtainable goals" and you know say, "if you look at the overall process, yes it is, you know daunting and exhausting, but focus on what needs to be accomplished now, you know, the next month, the next quarter, break it up in small sections like that and don't focus on the huge project where it's going to burn you out immediately." So I try to convey that to others to try to teach them, you know, how I was successful in that way.

P4 I2: They encourage you to join the ACA and, you know, which gives you more trainings, but I was already a member of that anyway... And the XXXX, which is the XXXX Counselors Association, I've been a member of that in the different divisions for at least, oh gosh, fourteen years plus, but so that's just part of who I am and what I do

P5 I1: I contacted XXX where I had gotten my Masters program and they um, were needing an adjunct teacher for summer semester and I thought okay let's just jump on it and after I signed up for it...I got excited about helping people learn...

P5 I2: so the outside experiences I think were...some of the richest for me

P5 I2: again the realization, oh my gosh I have to teach and then thinking about the least painful way to go about that and recognizing that probably my alma mater for my Masters program might be the most welcoming for that opportunity, since I had relationships with them, um, so, it was scary but it felt doable to put myself forward as a possible, um, adjunct professor for them

P5 I2: And then just watching over the years as the interns flow through the agency that I've worked with and, um, you know, seeing how different each of these interns were in their development process and how they all start out at different places but they, you know, finish fairly similarly in terms of being ready to approach the world of clinical work, post-graduation. Um, so that, being able to witness and help guide that process was, um, really meaningful for me.

P5 I2: So I was kind of in uncharted territory and I pretty much got annihilated in the, um, the presentation, um, in the sense that I invited discussion questions and because of the interdisciplinary mix of professionals, um, it was not necessarily what you would say successful.

P5 I2: Um, then when the opportunity to present much the same material came up in my professional home, which I consider the XXXXX, um, and there conference was coming to XXXX, um, and they picked it, I, um, felt like I was in a much better place to be able to do that, so again things that I never ever could have imagined doing prior to starting this process.

P5 I3: But, everything that was so transformative for me seemed to happen outside of the classroom. There was the mandate to do different things in different areas with the supervision with the teaching components of the internship process...pushed me so far outside of my comfort zone and my sense of not feeling prepared or good enough to do either of those things and it made me create opportunities for myself to be able to supervise and to teach and gain so much confidence in my ability to be able to do both of those things and then really broaden the understanding of myself as a counselor educator.

P6 I1: I think the experiences outside that have helped, would be teaching as an adjunct professor, on and off for, almost twelve years so , teaching and interacting with students um, has really helped, um, presenting, professional presentations have really helped I always present at my, ah, local (inaudible word) counseling conference

P6 I2: I mean, so I did three exploratory presentations over the last year and a half with that same group, so professional conferences and presentations were huge.

P7 I2: So, um, this year I've presented at several different conferences, I've applied for a couple of grants and my attitude the whole time has been like, I am expected to try,

what's the worst that can happen? I'll be rejected, that's not a big deal. Um, if I get rejected, I can always use this to build on to a new project.

P8 I3: and I realized as I was talking that it's probably when that shift happened is when I was doing some of the teaching, standing-up in front of the Masters level students and teaching them and hearing their responses and discussing that...yea, I was really was teaching that and helping them to become counselors.

P9 I1: I went to the ACES conference for the first time this past fall...and it was, that was a really great experience because I got to be around so many other people who do that, like that's what they do, they're counselor educators and supervisors and, you know, learning stuff from the conference sessions and then also just being around people who are really like, really happy that this was my first ACES and, like, happy that I was a doc student and so welcoming to the profession...

P9 I2: so it's not just in the program that I'm gaining some identity development it's outside of there as well it's at my work setting and then, in doing some teaching and training and conferences, like, outside of related school

P9 I2: I think, because I started, um, supervising while I was in the program as well, so, some of the stuff that I have been doing work-wise has paralleled with that, so it's not just in the program that I'm gaining some identity development it's outside of there as well it's at my work setting and then,

### **Connecting with Others (Central Category)**

Connecting with Others is defined as having some sort of face-to-face interaction with others emerged as a significant theme or category. Connecting encompassed everything from forming long term relationships and maintaining relationships to interacting in an informal way such as with networking. Consistently participants cited that making connections, interacting and having relationships with others gave rise to feeling supported and in turn were critical experiences to their identity development. Some participants also cited that connecting with others was a way of putting their experiences into context and stating that it made their experiences more "real". It was also expressed that the absence of interacting, not being able to connect, and/or having negative interactions was considered a hindrance to identity development. Another aspect of

connecting with others was the opportunity to make comparisons. Participants made comparison to faculty as a way of determining desired skills and then setting either goals or emulating, and also making comparisons with peers as a means of measuring their abilities and progress. As part of connecting with others, receiving feedback was an important aspect. Feedback received was either formal given by faculty, other professionals or peers about performance or progress, or informal such as attending a conferencing and feeling welcomed by others. Feedback, both positive and constructive helped participants gain confidence, which impacted their identity development.

### **Having a Range of Relationships**

A key component to the identity development was forming significant, more long term relationships with faculty/mentors and fellow students, or having established less significant, but still influential, relationships with other professionals, fellow students, or family and friends. The type of relationships that emerged as being significant were those that were described as mentor relationships. Several participants both explicitly and implicitly described having a mentor, or somebody that they go to that was a role model and a person to go to with questions, concerns, or ideas about their professional identity development. Having access to a mentor or a mentor type person to share frustrations, milestones and to get advice from were critical to identity development. Having access to a mentor or a significant relationship was important the participant's overall identity development. Another significant relationship that was described was relationships with cohort members. Relationships with peers, or fellow students gave participants the opportunity to share their current experiences with those who are having the same experiences, i.e. enrolled in a hybrid doctoral program. Having relationships with peers

allowed for comparison of the participant's progress and also opened up the participant's understanding of the diversity within the counseling profession itself. Additionally, these relationships also contributed to the participant's feeling supported and belonging to a larger community. In the absence of a formal cohort, a few participants formed informal cohorts that lent support to each other throughout the program. One participant expressed that with the support of his informal cohort, they were able to present at several conferences, assist with chapter writing and get an article published, accomplishments that would not have been able to do on his own. These accomplishments with his informal cohort strengthened his PID. These significant relationships were established, valued and likely more long term. Other relationships were also deemed as significant to the participants overall identity development were relationships with family and friends, whose support allowed for the pursuit of their doctoral hybrid program. Additionally, participants cited just the interaction with others, either during face-to-face class time, at conferences, or in other professional setting were necessary and beneficial to their professional identity development. These interactions led to feelings of belonging, helped to normalize their experiences, put their experiences in to context and made what they were doing feel more "real".

**Dimension: Forming life-long relationships – having less significant, but influential interactions.** This dimension encapsulates the range of relationships a participant expressed having while in the hybrid program. This range in relationships included very significant and impactful relationship that participants could count on for support, encouragement, and feedback. These relationships were typically described as mentor type roles, or relationships with peers or several peers in a cohort, and in some cases

forming an informal cohort. Additionally, a few participants expressed feeling that they were being treated more like colleagues and it was that more equitable relationship that was appreciated and led to growing confidence and progression in their identity development. Other relationships proved to be influential to the participants even if there were not as significant. These relationships were family and friends who were supportive and friendships that were formed during the hybrid process. These friendships might not be life long, but they serve a purpose while in the program in that they give participants someone to ask questions of, commiserate, and normalize their experience. These friendships can be with faculty or other students. Then there are interactions that may not lead to a relationship, but occur mostly in large group scenarios such as attending conferences, and residencies. Observing other CES at conferences allowed for participants to understand what it means to be a CES and have a professional community. A sense of being welcomed and part of a community was expressed; a sense of belonging.

This is an important dimension and it seems to reciprocally impact Receiving Positive Feedback – Receiving Constructive to No Feedback (Receiving Feedback) in that the more significant the relationship, the more the person might value the feedback, and the more helpful the feedback is, might impact the strength of the relationship, just as less significant relationships, or interactions the feedback might not be weighed as heavily by the participant, and if the feedback is considered hindering in any way the relationship may weaken.

P1 I1: I, I can kind of walk through how I felt in different phases of the process uh, and how that worked for me and how I had to kinda embrace it and `...

P1 I2: I've ah I call on her when I am frustrated and feel like I don't want to do this anymore um I call on her when I have reached a major milestone or progress to let her

know that it is moving forward. That relationship has proved to be invaluable, um, and it, its, she's one of the ones who said promise me, you'll, you'll finish, promise me that, you have a lot to offer your work with the students is, you know fabulous...

P1 I3: I think my mentors impacted it the most. So the educational piece contributed to it, but the mentors that I obtained through my program, they solidified it.

P2 I1: but when I had my first residency that was shortly after I started the program...those fears disappear and this a community and not only a community, this is, ahh, an opportunity that I had have to, to meet with people in Japan, in Korea, Africa, the Islands, Hawaii, you name it, I have met people from all over the world ...who are going through the same program that I am going, who have been to my classes, who seek me in the organization e-mails...

P2 I2: What jumps into my mind right now was an experience that I had when I went to the conference for the XXXX. I got to meet a few colleagues that came from all over the United States. I was presenting an hour and a half didactic presentation for gambling addiction. Ah, there I was not aware that one of the top leaders of gambling addiction treatment was sitting in my audience.

P2 I3: I have connected with many, but I will say that I had one professor who was instrumental in my foundation as a researcher and disseminator of information and that was during my qualitative research.

P2 I3: Also in my residencies, I found a group of professors that showed me, they were supervising me while I was teaching the masters students and the feedback that came from them, I think that I talked to you about that before, solidified, that solidified for me what the professor was telling me that was to trust the confidence and this is where you belong. So these other two professors have continued giving me that nurturing through, because they became my committee for my dissertation.

P3 I1: Because, like okay, where I was, or where I still am...there's no one around me that is going through the same experience... so it's very like isolating knowing that like, ok I'm a Ph.D. student in counselor education and supervision I'm going through all these you know classes, going through all this process, going through a these internal changes, you know, ideological changes, counseling changes, classes changes and , no one around me that I can have a conversation with really understands...or identifies with what I'm going through...no matter what.

P3 I1: I think the residencies were one of the best things of the entire program. Because it, you know, it's the opposite of what I was saying, you're thrown in with, you know, twenty, thirty, a hundred, two hundred people all going through that same experience and

all with, you know the same, um goals in mind and going through the same stuff. So that was one of the best experiences from the program.

P3 I2: And she still emails me now like “How’s your prospectus going you want me to review it for you?”... “Are you having any problems with researching, any questions?” She gives me her like Skype information and that’s not really her realm at all she’s in charge of the program not in the fine details of my dissertation journey.

P3 I2: I don’t know how to describe it, it kind of, like to me Ph.D.s and like Doctors were so like kind of on another level of existence. Yea, there kind of like, I felt like they were very far removed from like a counselor or a therapist, you know they were kind of like an academic person at the top level. But then when I started hanging out with them I they like mentoring me on a couple of things during the residency and all that, it really made me feel that like I was just like them, but like they shared all of their counseling experiences and it was the same kind of stuff that I was going through, still.

P3 I3: I think that had a lot to do with my connections with professors and my interactions with them, that really kind of contributed to, you know, my confidence and me continuing, you know, the pursuit of my program and in the believing that I could do it. And was mostly just exposure with the faculty members and their encouragement and feedback on everything and making, making the classroom education part very tangible and little more realistic, as in not, you know, as abstract classroom where, you know, the professor and the students are separated and there’s no, you know, it’s a very distinct boundary, so it’s they’re almost kind of like this entity. But in my program, I mean they would like give you their house phone numbers and they would call you up and say, “oh my god, I just read your paper, you know this is really good, I really think that if you want, we can co-write this, um you know, turn your paper into an article and do submission for it. You know, don’t worry about this barrier of this apprehension that you’re experiencing.” You know, they made it, the entire process very, I guess, encouraging and attainable.

P4 I1: I would say the experiences...that um...were most, most helpful, definitely would be the residencies that I attended. They were helpful because you got to meet people and you got to learn about ...you know you got to meet the professors , you got to learn about the school you got to really connect with them and, and...understand the missions and the goals of the program.

P4 I2: Because when you’re doing online, you really do need to have somebody that you can call and talk to things about... processing instructions, figuring out what the instructor is asking for, you know... Well, by connecting with other Ph.D. students, it helps to keep you focused and not make you feel like you’re doing it all by yourself...

Um, and getting to know their life stories and stuff is just very helpful in regards to figuring out what your identity is.

P4 I2: Um, I would say that at different trainings and seminars and conferences that I've gone to, when I talk about being in the Ph.D. program, the encouragement and the connection that you make with people was beneficial in building my personal identity.

P4 I3: I think they treated us all as if we were not colleagues, but close to colleagues... especially towards the end of the program, at the beginning it wasn't as much, it's just the way they write things and they, the message that came across was that you're valuable and that your opinion counts... You know, as a got further into the program, I got to know the faculty more and you know you could call and talk to them. And when I did my, um, teaching internship, the faculty member was just absolutely wonderful; she sent me a book that she and somebody else had written, it's called the Impact Therapy," If you can put that in your dissertation? (laughter)

P5 I1: the exposure to a really diverse group of individuals , um, in my cohort, um, a representative of different professions and yet still desiring to be counselor educators , ah, was a really rich experience for me, just their varied backgrounds, watching how their minds worked , um, just their interactions and like I was saying, the support, particularly when I was stretched to my max during comps, um, the, the camaraderie, the, the sense of belonging, the connection was huge

P5 I2: on a personal level, I felt really connected to several of the people in the cohort and as a result of that I felt connected then across the country at different institutions or different places of employment or different realms, like school counseling, that I could not even imagine having before I entered in the program. And so it provided for me this network of colleagues again on a national level that I never could have imagined going into the program and, potentially, lifelong connections and, so specifically...connections, that one, well I think I moved from being a fairly isolated private practitioner to being a part of a world that I knew nothing about.

P5 I2: And then, you know, really when it came down to, how do I teach this class, it didn't come from direct, you know, input from the professors in the program, it came from talking to colleagues and you know; if you were teaching this class what resources would you use, or could I take a look at this, you know, one of your old syllabi, or did you know there is a clearing house for syllabi on the internet. You know, those kinds of things and, um, just being exposed to the body of knowledge that's out there via colleagues through connecting with them and asking

P5 I3: and I had a tremendously supportive partner who was willing to, you know, put up with me being you know pretty much brain dead for three and a half years in terms of relationally

P5 I3: again the cohort that have become life-long cohort mates that are life-long friends as a result of this process, um, is just such a rich piece for me and when there's that sense of being in a relationship with somebody, you don't want to disappoint those people and want to continue on the journey with them and so...and once you get out of the course work, everybody just these little ships passing through the research ocean by themselves for the most part, except for their advisors, so it's pretty lonely. So to be able to talk to others who are, you know, experiencing or have experienced similar challenges is also supportive of, you know, pulling on the resilience to be able to finish.

P6 I1: I would say helped has been, the residencies, um, the the level to which we interact with colleagues and faculty is, is just unparalleled. So I think that has helped because I form, you form very intimate relationships with, with your fellow students and your colleagues, because you know, you're nine days, trapped in a hotel room and...and ah, and it's pretty intense, and and, I think not only those interactions but interacting with some really cool people and, really smart, intelligent and experienced people, I think that is as elemental as the interaction, the intimate for the lack of a better word, interaction with my colleagues and my faculty, during the residencies has probably been, been the most important.

P6 I1: online environment creates, you know you become, again good writers and good scholarship but, the lack of emotional interaction, the lack of collegial sort of ah...I'm just bantering, just being in the physical presence of, somebody I think has been the greatest hindrance because you can't, I mean we're all counselors we're all, counselors we're all counselor educators, I mean, want to be counselor educators, we're all relatively touchy-and-feely people, we like to see interaction we like to see, facial expressions we like to hear the tone of our voice we like to, you know rely upon the support from others...

P6 I1: it was a challenge, it wasn't, it wasn't impossible I think I did pretty good at developing some really strong friendships, that then turned into a variety of, of presentations I think I have presented with my, colleagues that I met in the, my second residency. I presented with them, three or four times at, at state and a regional and, and at, ah, the national conference with the ACA so, I would say it was a challenge that's hit the moderate difficulty, it takes effort it doesn't happen easily like it would if you were, seeing each other every week, um but between phone calls and Skype and face time and then all the opportunities that are out there...um, it's possible it's, it's, I don't know, it's moderately challenging it's not easy.

P6 I2: Early on in XXXX's program there wasn't a formal mentorship program, I think they have it now but I was in one of the first groups to come through. They, I did and she was the chair of my Doc program, um, because in residencies two and three a CES student is paired with a Masters or Doc faculty to be a teaching assistant and to teach, it's

coupled with the Masters and Masters in Counseling, residencies. So CES students with their faculty mentor teach and present to Masters students... So, it wasn't a formal mentorship program, but I established that mentor early on in residency two and I've presented with her...

P6 I2: The second two residencies is when I really established face-to-face contact, we formed a, sort of a, not a formal cohort, but an informal cohort ... and I sort of rode that out to this point. So I want to say it's probably vital to my, to a lot of my professional presentations, it's been vital to actually my dissertation topic and it's been vital to just hanging in there and, you know grinding out a Doc program like you have to do.

P6 I3: Also, getting in with a good group of colleagues, um, other students and faculty and, um, publishing a couple of things together, presenting a lot, presenting at both state and regional and national conferences. I have presented, oh eight or ten times with my colleagues there, I think that is really enhanced my confidence in my ability to continue to this stuff.

P7 I1: I think that the experiences that helped me the most were actually kind of the downtime experiences that I had with my cohort, where we weren't necessarily engaging in a particular assignment or class discussion, but really kind of had more of a free flowed discussion and we were just able to kind of...build a deep rapport and trust and have discussions regarding professional identity in which we didn't feel we had to relate everything back to the theory of the week, or whatever.

P7: For me, it really came down, I think where we talked about, um, my lunches with my cohort members when we were meeting. Just in a lot of conversations about how different our professional experiences were and how different are professional environments were, were really striking to me , but, and the fact that, despite the fact that some of us worked in community mental health and some of us worked in a private practice and some of us worked in school counseling, we really had, um, very similar structures and very similar , um, concerns for clients, even though our clients were so variable and yet had very similar concerns regarding our pursuits in higher education and licensure and professional identity in general

P8 I1: I became, I guess again, that sort of the process of beginning to identify more with the counselor educator folks , beginning to talk to them a little but in a different way about what they were doing and about what I could do and a confidence builder, again.

P8 I2: and I just remember she helped me feel so confident. I could send her an e-mail question, I even picked up the phone a few times and called her and just cause I needed to talk and needed somebody to say "you're going make it, it's going to be okay, were going to get through this."... but she supported me through that...she cared to listen and helped

me to know that what I was doing was important to her. That relationship is one that I will remember always.

P8 I2: So the four of us, um, Skyped, I think is the way we met, um, for several weeks and answered this ethical dilemma and wrote a paper together, sent it, you know, back and forth by e-mail . And it truly surprised me and amazed me what a bonding experience that was, like I said, they became my base as we moved through all the different points... But, you know, we all went through this together and supported each other and other classes, you know...

P8 I2: I think the people, the connections that you're talking about, made it all real. You know, you read things in the textbook or online or whatever and yea, okay I get the facts, whatever, but the interactions with other people made what I wanted to do seem real.

P8 I2: I saw other people who were counselor educators and they've been there all the time, but I never really thought much about them. I thought everybody was just a counselor, a practicing counselor like me, but, as I went more and more through my program I started realizing "oh, there's a lot of these people who are counselor educators who have probably been counselor educators for a long time,

P8 I3: I think those relationships helped me to build my identity as a Counselor Educator because they, um, were a reinforcement that I could do this, that this was a good thing for me to be doing, that, um, whereas, if all I had done was work on the computer, typing in papers and sending things electronically, there would not have been any of that reinsurance that I really was making progress and becoming more of that Counselor Educator. So, I do think that the fact that it was, at least partially, um, face-to-face, helped a lot. Um, and meeting the two School Counseling professors, in person, um, probably was the biggest impact and just online I would not have done that, so, um, it was important to have that face-to-face time.

P9 I1: the face-to-face meetings have been really helpful , um...you know some of the distance piece or the online piece is like, not feeling as connected and um , not having as much access immediately to...um, the professors and that kind of thing . They're super accessible via like e-mail and all that stuff but it's just really nice just to be able to have a face-to-face conversation where things bounce back-n-forth in the moment. Um, so being able to be face-to-face, or having access to my advisor, like via phone or Adobe Connect instead of e-mail has been really helpful. Um, I also think, a lot of the...like interactions that we have between cohort members, so us commenting on each other's work, sharing experience, that kind of thing; whether it's face-to-face or online, it's been really helpful.

P9 I2: one is of course my advisor, so I spend a lot of time talking with him and not just about the program but about what it's like to be a Counselor Educator and Supervisor on

a larger sense and what a career looks like and some of the really wonderful things about that and some of the really stressful things about that that, you know, I'm going to have to think about as I go forward. So that's been nice to have someone that is way far ahead of me in their career that can kind of guide me through that.

P9 I2: And so talking to other people, whether they're in the same situation as me as a Doc. student or they're further along in their career, helps me to put it into context.

P9 I2: So, yea I know I talked about going to conferences or talking with other professionals like outside of the program, but those have been really helpful to take it out, because the program kind of creates a little bubble and I can put the blinders on to get through it and that kind of thing. But, I have to step back and realize that it has a purpose and that there's a place for this information to go because there's a bigger vision for what I am doing

P9 I3: Also, relationships with faculty members was really helpful. So my relationship with my advisor has been like a constant something that has grown my confidence, um, just throughout and then of course other faculty members along the way. And as far as like how that has impacted my, how my confidence has impacted my professional development, that's like a huge piece for me, because some of it is just acknowledging and accepting that I have the skill and that like really doesn't change my skill level but it does change the way I feel about it.

### **Experiencing Different Types of Interactions**

Experiencing different types of interactions emerged as a property and encompassed having positive interactions in which the participants felt supported to negative or limited interaction in which the participants did not feel supported. Experiencing positive interactions with others also led to feelings of being validated, encouraged and provided a sense of belonging. These feelings were expressed in various ways by all of the participants. Support from various people, and different types of relationships, led to participants growing confidence in their new role as a CES, which ultimately aided in their identity development. Positive interactions with others in the counseling community, whether it was at professional conferences or in a work environment, led to participants feeling that they were being perceived as CESs, which in turn aided in their

identity development. Again, these positive interactions provided participants with a sense of belonging while they forged relationships, interacted with others, and attended conferences.

Conversely, a few participants cited times that they did not feel supported either because there was limited interaction with others, or negative interaction with others. It was also noted that professional identity development was hindered when participants did not have opportunity to interact, or had limited or negative interactions. Several participants expressed that not having interaction regularly with individual who were going through the same thing, i.e., a hybrid CES doctoral program, hindered their PID. Additionally, over half the participants cited that negative interactions, with faculty, peers, or other professionals was a hindrance to their identity development as well.

**Dimension: Having positive and supportive interactions – having non-supportive negative or limited interactions.** This dimension represents the type of interactions that can occur within a relationship or interaction. Interactions were characterized as supportive or non-supportive. Supportive relationships provided encouragement and assisted participants growing confidence. Non-supportive interactions were described generally in terms where the interaction was confrontational or challenging which made the participant feel un-supported and negatively impacted the growth of confidence. There were also instances where interactions were either very limited or non-existent and were considered by participants as negatively impacting there confidence and identity development.

Within its category, this dimension interacts directly with the other category dimensions; Forming life-long relationship – Having less significant, but influential interactions and Helping confidence and hindering confidence. Depending on the type of interaction it can have an impact on the relationship itself. If the interaction is un-supportive the relationship may become less significant. And in the interaction is supportive the relationship may strengthen. The other dimension within the property is Receiving Positive Feedback – Receiving Constructive or No Feedback. If the interaction is supportive then feedback will likely be received well and help confidence. If the interaction is non-supportive then the feedback might not be taken well and confidence could be hindered.

This dimension also directly impacts the dimension of Feeling like and imposter – Feeling “Like I can do this” with the category of Evolving sense of professional identity. Having supportive interactions impact the feelings the participants have about the process. Supportive interaction may help move the participant toward having more confidence, and having less supportive interactions may keep the person close to feeling like an imposter.

This dimension also impacts the dimensions within the category of experiential learning. When a participant experiences supportive relationships, they are more likely to try new CES tasks that had not been previously practiced. If they did not have supportive interactions, participants may be hesitant about trying new tasks.

P1 I1: My second experience was not the same it was almost disastrous and...but going through it was very, very difficult, um and it was almost like they required the professor to take on doctoral students as TAs in these residencies and she was very resistant and I had to take the high road in front of the students and not let them see the, the difficulties

that were going on between us and it clearly personality difficulties and me understanding that I needed to rely on this person for a grade, I needed to rely on her to teach me, but everything that she did that hindered me, also taught me what I wouldn't want to do to somebody else I think that was, that was the hardest thing that I've had to get through, um in my program outside of dissertation...

P1 I1: but I still think that when you don't have that day to day contact it, you lose something, especially for this type of profession where its known for having that contact and being able to build cohesiveness, you know, with the people that you're working with, whether their clients or students, or you know even your colleagues, um, to be able to give the best that you can give.

P1 I2: she was also the one who said you can do this, um she was the one that said you have a lot to offer to this profession, um, and I can honestly tell you that our relationship is incredible and I have only physically met her twice.

P1 I3: Connecting with other counselor educators saying okay yes this is truly, you have a calling to this and one of them, even finishing my dissertation part she was like, why aren't you teaching, you can still teach, why aren't you teaching? It's a disservice to our profession that you're not teaching and I'm like I need to finish this, I need to concentrate on the dissertation and then I'll teach when I'm done.

P2 I1: I brought my family into my program, and this is what I am doing, this is what I cannot do anymore, so it's your duty to do it, ah, so, my family, ah, had been here, constantly to take over what I used to do and I'm not doing anymore, I am a full time student and, this is what I want to do and they are supporting me 200%. Of course I'm working. And that is the key! If you do not have support from those around you, you cannot do cyber...

P2 I1: It was a pro, it was, it is a program with dual, with dual licenses; drug and alcohol, and mental health...Ah, their, although I had control within (inaudible word) the walls of the clinic, their administration were very staunchly resistant to change, resistant to, ah, to accommodate the needs of the community into the program. That was very frustrating...So I was held back of what I wanted to do...because the administration, administration of (inaudible word) did not want to change.

P3 I1: so it's very like isolating knowing that like, ok I'm a Ph.D. student in counselor education and supervision I'm going through all these you know classes, going through all this process, going through a these internal changes, you know, ideological changes, counseling changes, classes changes and no one around me that I can have a conversation with really understands...or identifies with what I'm going through

P4 I1: I would say that the most helpful outside of the program is the support that I get from friends and family and colleagues...in regards to working on my Ph.D....

P4 I1: an experience at one of the residencies where, um, a, it was like four of these students, that um...the best way to say it, is, they were kind of like snobby, they thought they were better than anybody else and they were really quite rude...That was not a positive experience.

P4 I2: Um, I would say that at different trainings and seminars and conferences that I've gone to, when I talk about being in the Ph.D. program, the encouragement and the connection that you make with people was beneficial in building my personal identity. You know, a lot of people are like "oh, I would have loved to done that, but it's too late," I'm like "it's never too late" (laughter).

P5 I1: certainly the support of my peers, written comps was literally terrifying for me and my peers were instrumental, um, I was in two different study groups and they were huge in, o h , reflecting that I could do this thing that I was terrified of and, the more it supported me in process...

P5 I1: and we as a cohort had interesting experience with the whole statistics class process, um that was incredibly painful in the sense that after the first term we said this professor is not working for us, please don't give us this person again...

P5 I1: and I imagined that would have been more nurturing going into it...And it wasn't particularly, (laughter) so there's been a tremendous I think frustration, sometimes for me, um, expressed by also some of my colleagues, um, but in the end I sure learned a lot, I couldn't tell you necessarily, you know, or quantify how I came about that learning, but, um, it was pretty significant...

P5 I2: being able to speak at a conference, that was another thing that I did along the way was entirely driven by me with support a lot of times from my peers in the cohort and another hugely meaningful experience for me was forming study groups for written comps and again having the experience of working, you know, really intimately with other of my cohort mates...

P7 I2: because I didn't feel particularly isolated in the hybrid program...I loved the time that we came together and hung out. I spent that time learning from people, but I was also very much okay, um, studying independently. I also had a group of people though that when I didn't understand something that I would just ask them and not feel embarrassed. I think all of those things helped...

P8 I1: a very difficult professor to work with, who um, I think he needed an internship person and I think his, um way of teaching is to challenge... (recording stopped for a

second)...I don't do so well with conflict so when, you know, he would...we had computers face-to-face stuff, you know, via the computer, so here we all are looking at each other and he's, um, challenging what I said, sometimes that was very, very difficult and even when I would see him face-to-face, he, he was particularly...difficult

P8 I2: and I just remember she helped me feel so confident. I could send her an e-mail question, I even picked up the phone a few times and called her and just cause I needed to talk and needed somebody to say "you're going to make it, it's going to be okay, we're going to get through this."... but she supported me through that...she cared to listen and helped me to know that what I was doing was important to her. That relationship is one that I will remember always.

P8 I2: I think, well I know they gave me confidence and I hoped, you know, I was able to do the same for them... When there is, you know, a moment of self-doubt, every now and then that I think we all have, then there's somebody there that says "well come on now, you can do that, you know, you're great at this and how's that coming, how are you doing?" With whatever it is, you know, whatever point it was we were, "how's that coming, is your class going okay?" Or, you know when, it was dissertation time, "where are you, have you defended your proposal and how's your writing?" And it's just somebody that's interested, I guess and because they're going through some of the same steps

P9 I1: And sometimes being in this, you know just this program it's like, I don't...talk to my cohort all the time versus, like in my, if I were in class with them all day and people that I interact with on a day to day basis, kind of have no idea of what I am doing...so, (laughter) I don't always get to talk about, these new things I'm putting into practice all the time

P9 I1: throughout the course of it there's, there has been some hopefulness, because if it was all like, oh I can't do this then I wouldn't still be here I don't think. So, there has been some of that, that's been fostered and kind of grown by, my advisor and everybody else in the cohort. Now I really do feel a lot more competent about it...but I think a lot of it came from working with my advisor ...who has been like pointing out those kinda things already. Like, oh yes you would be really good at this, or...um, that would be a really great thing for when you're working with your future students; like he's been throwing that stuff in there from the very beginning.

P9 I1: I ran into some of my masters professors there and they were like so excited that I had gone on to a doc program and, they were like, let us know how we can be of any use or what, if you just want to pick our brain and so...

P9 I2: so she has been like really available to help me get some more experience to kind of socialize myself into the field of other professionals and people that are kind of in the same specialty interest as me so like kids and adolescents and that kind of thing

P9 I2: And then it's been really nice to connect with faculty that I had in my Masters program because , you know, I've stayed in touch with them kind of professionally since graduating that program , but they're not connected to what I'm doing now, there just really into supporting my professional identity and development as a Counselor Educator.

### **Comparing Self to Others**

Comparing self to others emerged as a significant property by participants. Those participants who were in a hybrid doctoral program that had a formal cohort built in, cited that the ongoing relationship with peers promoted comparison as a means of gaging progress in becoming a CES. Additionally, a few participants expressed observing their peers exposed them to the other specialties within the counseling profession. This exposure not only highlighted the differences but the commonality, across the specialties, work environments, and geography, which increased the understanding of the counseling profession and their own PID within that community. Other participants whose program did not have a cohort expressed comparing themselves to faculty and wanting to be like them. Specifically, some participants expressed that watching faculty teach, provided an opportunity to assess techniques and skills and helped learn how to teach. A few participants expressed “wanting to be like...” a faculty member they were observing. Additionally, observing faculty helped participants better understand how to be a CES. Part of observing others also includes the opportunity to assess behaviors, skills, and techniques and discard them if they did not fit within the professional identity framework being developed by the respective participant.

**Dimension: Internalizing observations – discarding observations.** This dimension represents participants comparing their perceived level of skills and abilities to faculty and other professionals as they (faculty and professionals) engage in CES tasks.

Participants stated wondering if they could ever teach or supervise like the faculty they were observing. During this comparison participants determine whether they will emulate what they have observed or if they will discard it because it does not fit within who they see themselves as an evolving CES.

This dimension directly impact the dimension in Evolving sense of PI; Growing Confidence. If participants observe behavior and skill that they want to emulate, it is because it resonates with them in some way. Their confidence will likely increase. If they discard what they have observed, how they feel about the PID process may remain the same, or they may feel more empowered that they are confident about making a decision to discard observed behavior.

P1 I 1: feeling in ah of my first residency where I had to actually sit under a counselor educator, and thinking I want to be like her , you know, I want to be able to do this, I, I can do counseling like she can teach, but I want to be able to counseling and teach the way that she can teach

P1 I2: I watched her and I remember looking at her and thinking I want to be like, I want to be able to teach counseling the way she does, I want to be able to teach counseling the way I teach Christendom...

P1 I3: It was more of a confirmation and, um, one of my mentors I had worked under for a year and a half, um, as a teaching assistant and being able to kind of glean from her during that experience in various classrooms, teaching various topics, um, just really kind of, you know how you know what you want to do, but it pushed you over the top?

P5 I1: I actually got fabulous, vicarious school counseling, counselor education through, oh goo, XXX, one of my classmates, who um, started out living in (Inaudible), and move to, well she got, she's the one who got the job at XXX...

P5 I1: I learned so much about what it is to be a school counselor because that was another thing that I was very naïve about, so it was this process of vicarious education through my peers, through then having the, uh, the requirement have an aspect of teaching in my uh, internship and, just seeing the process itself of, you know being in higher ed. And what that looked like in our actual program that made it appealing and feel obtainable for me.

P5 I1: the experiences within the program were witnessing effective teaching techniques, um, experiencing teachers that I felt communicated the material in a way that made rich and integratable, and then (inaudible) witnessing...some teachers that, some instructors that, professors that were less than dynamic...

P5 I2: and they were willing to have me and I had a trusted colleague there to model from

P5 I2: so particularly my cohort mate that was my roommate during the program went on to get a job at a very prestigious institution before she was even finished with her Ph.D. and, so her journey was such a huge learning experience for me for...certainly she was the exception rather than the rule as far as from going from never taught at all to getting, you know, a position at a very well respected, um, university. Um, but, watching kind of the questions that she never knew to ask, or the experiences that she has had along the way has been a huge vicarious learning for me and without that connection I never would have had that learning

P7 I2: I would say being exposed to, um, to a huge, wide variety of professionals within the program, um, and kind of realizing the commonality across the different fields made me just think about research ideas a little bit differently.

P8 I1: getting to know the professors and learning what their particular, you know, theoretical views are and you know, does that fit with what I do, or does it not and learning from their various styles,

P8 I2: I guess that was part of the transition, I identified with them as students, I identified with her as the instructor and, um, I remember thinking several times, you know, "I wish I could be like her." She's a little bit older than I am, but not a lot.

P9 I1: I was kind of motivated to maybe, propose to present at like WACES or other conferences, cause it seemed like once I saw the level of it, I was like, oh I can do some of this, you know...some people were like, really amazing, but others were like newer professionals kind of presenting on their research or, just kinda stuff that they had noticed or were working on their research. Oh I could totally do it! I just see how I started to fit into this world and kind of where I would be in a new professional kind of way and then ultimately down the line

**Dimension: Measuring up to peers – exceeding peers.** Some participants expressed that comparing themselves to their peers helped them understand their competency level. This directly impacted their confidence and their identity development as CES. This seemed more relevant to the participants who were in a program that used a cohort model. Some participants stated feeling that they felt “behind” compared to their peers because it seemed like their peers had so much more experience. Participants expressed feeling relieved because they felt they were equal to their peers, and there were instances when comparing themselves to their peers, participant’s felt as though they were ahead of them in some ways. These comparisons were a way of measuring progress and ultimately, with time, aided in growing confidence and movement with their identity development.

This dimension directly impacts the dimension under Growing Confidence; Feeling like an “Imposter” – Feeling “like I can do this”. When comparison with others is more toward I feel behind my peers, participants might be feeling more like an imposter and feel more anxiety. When comparison lean more toward feeling that they are ahead of their peers their confidence is high.

P5 I3: Well in the peer study groups, it was fascinating for me to be able to watch how different people showed-up differently when we were putting together our material for, you know, each segment of the CACREP areas we were studying and how people came at it and who was, you know, like uber over the top Type-A in terms of the richness and the depth of the material that they brought to the study and who just kind of did you know whatever, however, to just get through it and know that I measured-up I guess. You know, there is this unspoken about, um, I think just a low level competition that goes on conceivably in the cohort process itself, in do I measure up, am I smart enough, am I good enough? You know, we can intellectualize and say we all bring different experiences and different ways of showing-up, but I don’t know if it’s my Type-A, oldest of seven thing, but I’m kind of judging and measuring myself against my colleagues

P5 I3: that study process, um, besides being incredibly bonding and supportive on almost all levels was, you know, interesting for me to see that I am okay, I do measure-up, I'm smart enough. Because having not grown-up with even the words "critical thinking" much less ever being expected to do that, I always felt a little behind the eight ball, I guess in that realm and so really struggled to see how I could show-up and match others in the program.

P7 I1: I think other people, again, I am kind of embarrassed by this , but I think other people in their past academic experiences, for example in their masters program, had really been pushed to reflect on this...professional identity, much harder than I had and I think there was this kind of ...um...maybe unconscious motivation where I felt, not necessarily inferior to my peers, but it was very apparent to me very quickly like wow, I haven't done this work yet, I need to get on it, I really need...I really...need to think about this. So, I would have conversations with people, when we met face-to-face and then I would have myself , like for example, driving home and thinking ...wow, so and so kind of thinks this and so and so comes from this background and, how does my background and how does my experience really, fit into this? Or, I would find myself thinking, like, so and so said this when we met today and ...wow that's kind of scary and, what are my thoughts and why do I have these thoughts, so...

P7 I3: (laughter)...I think comparing myself to others, isn't that horrible? I kind of, um, you know, I looked around the room and I realized, you know, I know what I'm talking about, my experience that I've had is valid, um, I understand how these concepts and theories that we're discussing in class can be applied to the professional world, which other members of my cohort really didn't seem to understand how to apply stuff, or how to translate things outside of a text or outside of a classroom.

P9 I1: P9: Um, so, probably at the very beginning I had a lot of the like, oh no what am I doing here, this is not a great idea, um, that, some of that imposter syndrome...doubt, a lot of that going on. Because um, I hadn't taught before, I hadn't really supervised before and so I know other people in my cohort have and so I was thinking, oh wow, I'm like really behind, I don't really know anything about this.

P9 I1: I was kind of motivated to maybe, propose to present at like WACES or other conferences, cause it seemed like once I saw the level of it, I was like, oh I can do some of this, you know...some people were like, really amazing, but others were like newer professionals kind of presenting on their research or, just kinda stuff that they had noticed or were working on their research. Oh I could totally do it! I just see how I started to fit into this world and kind of where I would be in a new professional kind of way and then ultimately down the line

P9 I3: And of course, like, going to ACES conference, just really being around other professionals and starting to see how much I'm like others who are already doing it and then having that moment of realization, oh it's not this special magical thing that I need to do or be, I'm already there really because I want to be, you know?

P9 I3: So, sometimes the hybrid part was really difficult, cause we weren't around each other as much, but when we were around each other and I could see what people were doing that was so different than me but also kind of similar because they were either a little bit ahead of me like in teaching and new experiences and that kind of thing, I could see where they were in all different phases of where we could end up.

### **Receiving Feedback**

Receiving feedback from others, such as faculty or other professionals, was cited as having a critical impact on the identity development process. Through receiving positive feedback participant's gained confidence in their skills and abilities, which progressed their identity development. Positive feedback validated their growth and skills, and appears to have encouraged further pursuit of experiences that would be considered CES tasks. Constructive feedback lead to feeling humbled, but primarily to participants being self-reflective, and understanding that learning is an ongoing process. Some participants cited that receiving both positive and constructive feedback also provided an opportunity to reflect on their experiences and their evolving identity. It was also mentioned that feedback was a critical piece in a hybrid program with developing as a CES, since face-to-face interaction is limited. Additionally, feedback is also viewed in very broad terms, to include interactions with others (Individuals and organizations) that made the participants feel accepted, or not accepted (belonging). Conversely, feedback that was perceived as being placating or as not authentic hindered identity development. While a property of Connecting with Others, Feedback is very interrelated with Learning to be a CES, and Evolving Sense of Self.

**Dimension: Receiving Positive Feedback – Receiving Constructive or No Feedback.**

This dimension represents the range of feedback that participants received and how its implication to their identity development. Feedback is also defined in the broadest of possible ways. Feedback can be very direct and formal that might be given from a faculty member to participant in an evaluative way, it can be feedback that is less formal, but still from faculty but non-evaluative. It can be from peers during interactions and even in the most informal way when going to a conference or a residency and feeling welcomed into the environment. It can also be very subtle as when getting asked to teach a class and then return a gain, being asked to take on more responsibility. This property has a direct impact on growing confidence and feeling validated as a CES.

This dimension has a reciprocal relationship with the dimension Forming life-long relationships- Having less significant, but influential interactions. Feedback that helps confidence could strengthen relationships and highlight the importance of ongoing interactions. Feedback that hinders confidence growth could weaken a relationship.

There is also a reciprocal relationship with one the dimensions within Engaging in experiential learning, specifically Engaging in a new task – Engaging in a task where some mastery is present. Feedback that helps with confidence will increase the chance that the participant will continue engaging in experiential learning, which ultimately aids is confidence growth and identity change. Feedback that hinders confidence may create resistance in continuing in trying new tasks. Helping feedback helps build confidence and encourages the participant to continue with experiential learning, and feedback that hinders confidence, may instill some reluctance on part of the participant, but in general they will still continue pursue the experiential learning.

This dimension has the greatest impact on the dimension of Feeling like an imposter – Feeling “Like I can do this”. When feedback is seen as helpful or authentic then it helps to grow confidence. With that is not helpful, or even if there is an absence of confidence, participant’s feelings of being an imposter, or having anxiety is more likely.

P1 I2: so she was also the one to give me a slap on the wrist and say no you can’t do this and, um so, I think helped me to see that you can’t get it for someone, they have to want it for themselves, you know, these are your colleagues they have to want it for themselves, and they can’t count on you to pick up the slack for them when they’re not in the place that they need to be in,

P1 I3: I became the person who responded to a lot of those e-mails and I graded papers for others and even the feedback from them like, how are you able to do that, came from my experience of working the person who was my mentor and how she had trained me to be able to do it. And it wasn’t that she trained me to do it half way, it was she trained me how to do it so effectively and efficiently that I not only finished what was required of me as a TA, I was able to step in for other professors as a TA and help them.

P2 I1: Ah, when you go to residencies, ah, when I, I went to residencies that the lar, the biggest impact...feeling, doing and, and seeing my professionals, listening to them . My experience as a teacher for the Masters student, ah, the feedback that I received from the director of the, ah, counselor educator and supervisor, ah, ah, faculty and the director, so those are the biggest impact that solidified my identity. So, they in, they inspect, put the seal on what I truly believe is me. So that was my biggest experience as teacher and receiving so many positive feedback from the Master, ah, professors. They says you are awesome, you’re a natural, ah, all those who have observed my teaching gave me the same...um...ah, the same feed-back, of course.

P2 I2: Well it helped me, first of all, it validated what I thought my philosophy was and my identity as a counselor educator and supervisor that supported my thoughts . Uh, the constructive criticism, or the constructive feedback, uh, helped me to realize that learning how to teach is a lifelong process and I can never be certain that I know what I am doing.

P2 I2: However, when I went into the debriefing and they addressed that is, I just loved the way that you enmeshed with what you were teaching and the reaction of the students joined you, they can join into it. So, that feedback was very powerful.

P2 I2: Well it was, it was in a negative and in a positive way, the positive is, they validated my skills as an educator, but at the same talk they let me know, you did not do

your research completely because we are the lead in gambling in XXX and our name is not in the reference page.

P2 I2: Yes I did, yes I did with in the same debriefing they normally use the sandwich evaluation, in which they place the great things and then they advise and then another great thing. One of the evaluation, uh, of constructive criticism that I did receive when I was doing the teaching, the role playing I was a little bit lost in there I just let the students take over the role play and then I observed but I did not interject and that was an area that I was offered constructive criticism. The ability for me to give feedback in the midst of it, so the students have the ability and the opportunity to practice that at the moment.

P2 I3: what gave me the confidence was the feedback received by my professors, the mentoring, the guidance they gave me to adapt my prior experience, my prior knowledge into the cyber arena.

P2 I3: I think it was the third course that I took and his feedback and his patience and how he corrected my and guided me to the right direction. Although I had an understanding of qualitative research, he made me realize and see the areas that I should work more, that I should develop a little bit more confidence. And his positive feedback and motivation impacted the way I progressed throughout the program. He was instrumental, his feedback was instrumental throughout and to this day, three years and a half into the program, I continue going back to my notes, back to his feedback that I did copy and paste in a word document, to have them there as a motivating thought for...to continue.

P2 I3: Yes, every time, as a matter of fact I give him an update on where I am at and what I am doing and he continues to give me positive feedback and "I know you can do it," "we need you here," "just hurry-up and finish." So all that positive feedback is a motivation factor, he is giving me the confidence throughout the whole program to continue growing.

P3 I2: So I had to really quickly, whenever she gave me feedback at the very beginning I was very like standoffish with it, felt embarrassed and like "oh my gosh, you know, how is it that I'm a Ph.D. student and I can't even grasp this little applications of this theory?" And very quickly I had to become very like humble and receptive and now, you know after doing that for a whole week, I really appreciated it, because now that theory is, you know, one that I am openly like pursuing and implementing in different parts of my practice.

P4 I2: I would say the most beneficial feedback I got was from the professors and it was written feedback on my papers, um, and the APA process. Is that what you're asking me? Oh, okay, okay. Um, I would say the written feedback on my papers, because online

that's how it's done, from the instructors helped in my identity of understanding and developing my APA ability.

P4 I2: Um, it just makes me feel like I know what I'm doing in regards to writing a paper or an article or, you know, something that requires APA... Um, wow, I would say the feedback that was most beneficial was to be able to concisely put my ideas down on paper.

P5 I1: my major advisor had mentioned that of the 17 or 18 people in our cohort, um, she was really open that I was least counselor educated oriented of, of the group... well I guess, I heard a bit of criticism in that, um, which made sense, it didn't make sense at the time because, I, I was, in there for the end purpose, I wanted a Ph.D. ... I think her comment got me thinking in more along the lines of, oh I wonder what that's like because I always felt a bit different that most of my cohort mates, um, in terms of there weren't more than, I think maybe 1, 1 or 2 of us that were in just the focus of practice...

P5 I2: the second year student evaluations were incredibly meaningful for me in terms of knowing that I went into it not wanting to be...the popular teacher, but the teacher that helps them learn and getting that kind of feedback from students was really rich and validating experience for me.

P5 I2: and you're getting feedback about how you show up as a professional. Anyway, it was a rich experience, in terms of both being able to see myself as how I compare to others in my cohort and to get feedback from the professors along the way and from my advisor was just a really rich experience, that I never would have had, had I not done the program.

P5 I2: So her feedback was also really meaningful and that myself questioning process was off putting and I was aware of that for her and about me and she wasn't even really sure that it was a good fit at all and she moved from that place to seeing me do a teaching segment and I moved, you know, in my own self-confidence, so she go to witness that, so I think that was really meaningful as well.

P5 I3: So there was that, there was, again, feedback from XXXX, my advisor and from then all the way through to when she got around to writing my letter of recommendation, the things she said about me were absolutely amazing... I'm like, "oh my god, is this really me?" (laughter) Does she really mean these wonderful things?" My husband was totally blown away and he is an XXXX and so, she does good letters. Anyway, that was so validating and then the first time I got the student evaluations when I taught a class on my own and that was you know a huge vulnerability and a huge reinforcement that at least some of the things that I was doing, even though I was nervous and terrified teaching a class for the first time then, they were actually working. So, that was very validating as well.

P6 I2: absolutely, um, most of it positive. Fairly early on I think I guess I identified myself as a decent writer, which I thought I was, I mean, but by no means, I not a Hemingway, but um, I thought of myself as a decent writer. A lot of feedback was positive, you know, “you’re a good writer, you should keep writing, you should try to publish this,” you know, “you should pursue this.”

P6 I2: But then a lot of the technical feedback on, you know, I was just busted on my dissertation, that’s frustrating (laughter), because I had to go back through all my chapters, I just, I screwed-up “et al.” I should have known, I thought the period was behind “et” instead of “al”, and so (laughter)

P6 I2: The feedback was probably more scholarly, you know, almost exclusively in the scholarly writing perspective, the feedback you get in all the papers, in all my dissertation work, um, in projects. So mostly in just formalizing my scholarly writing skills, being a better writer, understating APA style, understanding literature reviews, the use of the library, referencing and all that kind of stuff. So I guess that’s an aspect of professional identity, but more, um, scholarship in writing is what “feedback” contributed to.

P7 I2: I’ve had both peers and instructors kind of comment on it, like just get rid of your complex and just be confident in who you are and blah, blah, blah. And there was an instructor that I had at one point who really kind of called me out on the anxiety and just like what is this about; this is ridiculous; this is a barrier... I just think that being called-out on that, um, was really good time for me to engage in some self-improvement and stuff like that.

P7 I2: Um, I don’t know that it taught me a whole lot , but it made me, kind of, because I respected the person so much and really believed that the interaction was an authentic observation, it made me stop a little bit and do like, wow I really am anxious; what is this about? Just take the time to kind of reflect on it. Um, and, you know, think about my education, kind of how I wanted, what I thought was deficient and how I wanted to improve things and what type of clinician I really wanted to be. It just made me think a little bit about, um, not only my skills but my professional identity in the way I was portraying myself, because I think I was so worried about, um, not being strong enough or somehow being deficient in that I wasn’t fully acknowledging all of the strengths that I do have.

P7 I3: Yea, yea...absolutely. And then I would say even getting some positive feedback from a couple of professors in particular, um, professors that I really respected in the program. When I received feedback that looked, you know, something like “hey, you’re doing a good job, this is great, you really do get it.” I was like yes!

P8 I2: You know, if the instructor or even a classmate indicates that, you know, that’s not quite enough, then it tells me, oh okay, I need to do a little more. Or if I’m going in the

wrong direction with an idea or a thought or whatever, then okay, let's come back this way a little bit. So I do think feedback from others provide that measure of how I'm doing.

P9 I1: like talking with my advisor, just kind of learning about what, like transferable skills I really have. Because before I was a counselor, I worked with kids and I did like team building and that kind of thing and, so how can I use the stuff that I already know how to do or that I'm already doing as a counselor and then, grow that into being a counselor educator, so maybe it, so it was more like, not starting from scratch...

P9 I2: Faculty has been really helpful overall but I had a specific interaction with one of my professors last summer, probably. She made a note to me about it was almost the end of the quarter, I guess, and I had done perfectly on all of the assignments, did really great presentations, all that kind of stuff but she docked me points on my participation because I didn't speak up in class very much. So, and that kind of came out of nowhere for me, but she was noticing that, I guess... she kind of questioned me about it, um, about...clearly I knew the information what was holding me back from talking more...So we kind of processed a little bit about where I thought I felt I fit into the group and in my professional development, where I thought I was at and what right I thought I had to start...you know, making statements to other people and that kind of thing. And it was really transferable to my overall development to becoming an educator and supervisor and what I thought about my authority to say something...So that was a really impactful interaction and it was like a, almost about a silly thing like, "why don't you talk more in class?" But then it turned into a much larger...you know, issue, I guess...

P9 I3: So having them as a good model was really helpful and also getting like feedback from them was really helpful too, about what they saw in me that would be of a strength, so like getting positive like feedback from them or even constructive feedback was really helpful too because they had different experiences than me.

### **Evolving Sense of Professional Identity (Internal Experience)**

From the beginning and throughout the program participants expressed varying degrees of development with their professional identity as a CES. There were many factors that contributed to the participants Evolving Sense of Professional Identity as a CES. One factor seems to be how they perceived their identity when they started the program.

Those participants who did not have a strong sense of their identity, or did not have experience with engaging in CES tasks, such as teaching and supervising, prior to

entering the program, seemed to experience more self-doubt and angst at the beginning of the program and as their identity developed. Those participants who had prior experience seemed to be more confident when engaging in those specific CES tasks and seemed to more easily include those aspects of being a CES in their evolving identity. One of the critical elements to the participants evolving identity was connecting with others. Establishing significant relationships or even just interacting with others was invaluable. It provided participants a sense of what they were doing was “real”, it gave them needed support and encouragement, and connected them to a professional community. When engaging in new CES tasks, receiving some type of feedback was critical in moving the participant along in the identity development. Receiving feedback from others, formal or informal and positive or constructive, helped participants gage their progress and built their confidence as they continued evolving their CES identity. Evolving Sense of Professional Identity is very interrelated with the categories of Learning How to be a CES and Connecting with Others.

### **Growing Confidence**

The range of emotions that participants expressed as their identity, or aspects of their identity changed, included feeling like an imposter, feelings of self-doubt, anxiety, frustration, nervousness, confusion, hopefulness, confidence, and a feeling of “I can do this”. These evolving feelings were mostly tied to starting the program and new CES tasks that participants did not have a lot or any experience with before starting the program. Again, emotions varied from participant to participant depending on if the CES tasks were new to the participant, or if they had already established a level confidence with those tasks prior to entering the program. Feelings became increasingly more

positive as experience was gained and feedback was received. Feedback gave participants a sense of being seen as a CES, which validated their evolving identity.

**Dimension: Feeling like an “imposter” - feeling like “I can do this”.** This dimension represents the various feelings a participant shared they had as they started their program and their identity was changing they had a range of feelings from feeling like an imposter, as well as feelings of anxiety and self-doubt. As participants gained more experience, interacted with others, received both formal and informal feedback, and felt validated anxiety and self-doubt became less and confidence grew.

The range of this dimension does impact the dimension of Changing Identity, in that if a participant feels like an imposter, they have less confidence, and therefore may experience a greater degree of PID with their CES identity. Those that have a little more confidence with their evolving identity may not have as steep of a growth curve with their identity development.

This dimension does not necessarily impact any other dimension, but instead is impacted by every dimension in the category of Connecting with Others, every dimension in Learning How to be a CEs, and the dimensions under the property of Describing Self Going into Hybrid Program.

P1 I1: I remember really feeling inept, um and, and, and unprepared to teach and um but I also remember getting to that point where I felt like, okay I can do this, its, its not as hard as I , I need to not be so hard on myself...I feel very comfortable with it now, but I remember not being comfortable with it...

P1 I2: and it just kind of was a very assuring place to be in, that it was feasible um, I was capable, that maybe some of the anxieties that were lurking were good anxieties as opposed to bad anxieties that they could be motivators and not something that could be a

detriment, um, so it was, I actually remember thinking, “I can do this, I can really do this”...

P1 I3: Yes and I would say that working in the position of a TA and being able to assist others really was legitimization of that.

P2 I1: So, they in, they inspect, put the seal on what I truly believe is me. So that was my biggest experience as teacher and receiving so many positive feedback from the Master, ah, professors. They says you are awesome, you’re a natural, ah, all those who have observed my teaching gave me the same the same feed-back, of course. Nervousness was, they are present all the time, I was shaking throughout, ah but I let, I let me to come out, rather than focus on the observation piece...I just forgot about that and I allowed me to come out. And as the professors were putting a seal on it, it more comfort, ah, the more, more comfortable I became.

P3 I3: You know, not having those experiences in the beginning, kind of, I think hindered my development as a counselor until you know I went into like a Ph.D. program and then I felt a little bit more empowered as I was learning and given those opportunities and explained about, you know, all those kind of aspects.

P4 I3: I would say what contributed to my growing was the faculty members that I had, they are all, all of them were in the leadership role of some form, like they’ve all been with the ACA or the APA, they’ve written books, I mean they’re very experienced and qualified.

P5 I2: with my advisor, and she was my instructor at the time, I think she was a little nervous of how much self-questioning I was doing during that internship process where I launched into teaching a class and, um, I was pretty hard on myself, I was pretty scared and I think she was pleasantly surprised then when I did bring a video to the supervisor’s office that I wasn’t as bad as I was making myself out to be , I think and in fact, um, maybe okay at it

P5 I3: Once I survived written comps, I felt like I could conquer anything (Laughter) But, everything that was so transformative for me seemed to happen outside of the classroom. There was the mandate to do different things in different areas with the supervision with the teaching components of the internship process...pushed me so far outside of my comfort zone and my sense of not feeling prepared or good enough to do either of those things and it made me create opportunities for myself to be able to supervise and to teach and gain so much confidence in my ability to be able to do both of those things and then really broaden the understanding of myself as a counselor educator.

P5 I3: P5: Oh, absolutely. First of all that the school, XXXX in particular, would let me teach for the first time and then actually invite me back, was profoundly impactful in that, oh well, I must have been good enough, cause their asking me back.

P6 I2: but got me through that self-doubt and those moments where it's like "oh jeez, is this worth it, I got so many other things I want to do?" So, um, it just helped me, those characteristics just pushed me through to get to this point.

P6 I3: So I think that the tremendous amount of writing and found that in specifically in a hybrid program, really helps my confidence. Also, getting in with a good group of colleagues, um, other students and faculty and, um, publishing a couple of things together, presenting a lot, presenting at both state and regional and national conferences. I have presented, oh eight or ten times with my colleagues there, I think that is really enhanced my confidence in my ability to continue to this stuff.

P7 I1: P7: Well if I wanted to be really honest with you , I think at first there was a little bit intimidation , um, and it was kind of like, oh crap, that this is, this is a core component of counseling and...I'm already a licensed counselor and, and I'm, I haven't done this work. So I feel, you know, at first it was...sheer intimidation and it wasn't the panic and maybe not even a little bit of frustration that I was able to get as far as I did professionally without, doing what is probably very, very foundational work . Um, and then after that kind of initial...um, intimidation and panic wore off, I think I became kind of almost invigorated, like really excited to kind of engage in the work and I realized that, um, I was in an environment where I had the ability and the tools to kind of engage in it; so I felt pretty motivated.

P7 I1: I am kind of embarrassed by this, but I think other people in their past academic experiences, for example in their masters program, had really been pushed to reflect on this...professional identity, much harder than I had and I think there was this kind of ...um...maybe unconscious motivation where I felt, not necessarily inferior to my peers, but it was very apparent to me very quickly like wow, I haven't done this work yet, I need to get on it...

P7 I2: And so, I would say that experience, that expectation to have to do some research and have to be very involved in my professional community was both really terrifying and both really exhilarating. I was scared because kind of going back to that whole idea of the imposter syndrome that we talked about last time, and like when am I ever going to get published, am I okay, can I get through this. There was that fear. And then there was this excitement that went with, wow, I get to study stuff that I want to, because I want to, in the manner that I want to.

P8 I2: And I think some of the confusion there with my own identity is, I truly was still a student. You know, those people that were in the front of my class, still were the ones

that were in charge, they were the instructors and it took a while to get up to the point where I felt okay, I'm almost their equal.

P8 I3: Well, I think you said it, "the growing confidence" and I think that's probably from just the emersion in the field itself and the knowledge and talking about it and writing about it and reading about it and doing it. Just, I mean, you know, you're saturated with it and in doing that, I think I did become more and more confident, that I did know what I was doing and I was becoming more and more prepared to help somebody else to help other people learn how to do all this and actually apply it

P9 I1: like at the beginning there were a lot of feelings of self-doubt , um, anxiety , um, just some negativity and then, throughout the course of it there's, there has been some hopefulness, because if it was all like, oh I can't do this then I wouldn't still be here I don't think.

P9 I1: Um, so, probably at the very beginning I had a lot of the like, oh no what am I doing here, this is not a great idea, um, that, some of that imposter syndrome...doubt, a lot of that going on. Because um, I hadn't taught before, I hadn't really supervised before and so I know other people in my cohort have and so I was thinking, oh wow, I'm like really behind, I don't really know anything about this.

P9 I1: Now I really do feel a lot more competent about it . Cause like I'm about to be done with my second year and done with the course work, um...and about to be doing it. And so I feel really hopeful and really confident about it. I think there is still some hesitations, some anxiety, some doubt and I think that doubt comes and goes now a little bit more than it did before...but...

P9 I3: So starting to feel more confident in, um, in the fact that I was a lot of what I wanted to be before, um, before like I officially became that, if that makes sense? So, sort of like me realizing that I had a lot of these skills and abilities before they were actually put into practice or before like they were even formally taught

P9 I3: I think it kind of, at the beginning it certainly like came and went in phases, like I would start to feel like I was getting it and then feel like oh, okay, nope, that's a totally new thing, kind of like that. But, I think over all....making relationships with my cohort members was really helpful because I got to see what they were doing, um, in other parts of the country even. So, sometimes the hybrid part was really difficult, cause we weren't around each other as much, but when we were around each other and I could see what people were doing that was so different than me but also kind of similar because they were either a little bit ahead of me like in teaching and new experiences and that kind of thing, I could see where they were in all different phases of where we could end up.

P9 I3: I think that's kind of a word that I would use to describe some of the, you know, moments where I was like, oh yea, I do have the, um, the right to be here or something to contribute, a valid perspective, just kind of continues to reinforce the fact that this, and to me internally, this didn't happen by chance, it's not because of whatever, it's because there really is something worth pursuing in my research, in my skill set and then in that I contribute back to others.

P9 I3: through the feedback of like how other people see me and then, more recently, I just got, um, two conference proposals accepted at WACES and so that's kind of boosting my confidence about it, that other people will see me as potentially an equal or having something to say or something important to contribute. So I think some of that, it hadn't happened yet, but it is in the process of happening now, so it does kind of make sense to me when you say that, that that is an important piece, because I was really excited to get that. And then when I started thinking about it, I was like, oh great, now I have some more legitimacy.

### **Changing Identity**

Most to the participants describe a moment or a series of experiences when they could sense their identity changing. Words used to describe this change in identity were hatching, turning, evolving and as a transition. These moments or experiences often occurred within the context of connecting with others, and in conjunction with engaging in a CES tasks. Often feedback from others, either formal or informal assisted with increasing confidence and fostering identity development as a CES. When talking about identity changes, participants often focused on one aspect of their identity, such as teaching, supervising, leadership or scholarship. The changes with individual aspects of CES identity tended to be related to tasks that the participant had little to no experience with prior to entering their hybrid and were now engaging in as part of their program and identity development. Participants did also share moments when they felt/knew that their identity in total was changing.

**Dimension: Experiencing small (role) changes – experiencing significant (total)**

**changes.** This property represents the participants changing identity. Participants expressed their identity changing in a variety of different ways. Participants expressed their teaching, supervising, leadership, or research identity changing as they engaged in tasks related to these various roles associated with being a CES. When speaking about these aspect or role changes these were considered smaller changes in the total identity development. These small changes that occurred as parts of the identity were evolving were again often associated with experiential learning and receiving feedback in some form, either direct, formal or informal and less direct. Participants also communicated that they sensed that their overall identity was changing. It also appears that participants who had some experience in taking on CES roles such as teaching and supervising had less dramatic changes in their professional identity development because they were already taking on some of these roles.

This particular dimension does not directly impact other dimensions in other properties, but is impacted by the participants evolving feelings about the process and the identity and experience the participant had prior to entering the hybrid program.

P3 I1: I think...you know with what I was learning and what I was internalizing , you know like I said that I started taking more like pride in, like, the profession and myself and trying to , you know, look at different things like, you know conferences and (inaudible) and all that . I think that gave me, you know, a greater sense of, of confidence and all that, so I kind of...fell into those roles and encouraged it, versus not.

P3 I1: and I started identifying with that like mentor kind of like educator or supervisor I not even quite sure, because I wasn't technically their supervisor and I technically was not like their boss or anything but...you know I became more that mentor role and people just kept coming to me and asking me questions and you know running things by me like program changes or, hey, can you, you know, look over this new group and, um, that I'm gonna start and, you know, just evaluate for me and I found like myself falling

into a lot more of those kind of roles on the outside, that later on I could tie in...you know, as I was like, progressing and I guess my identity was changing that I could tie into in-school stuff that I ran into later on, and it helps my, you know, like make all the things click together.

P3 I2: It was definitely like that whole experience shaped, you know, my professional side which was like a very big learning experience for me. And then also in my student, I guess persona, it really made me kind of shift and see how different professors do different things and you know teach different classes and approach different topics and you know really ran a classroom...

P3 I2: Yea, exactly, it was really intense and also, it made me even consider, you know I was more interested in supervision side of what the Ph.D. program and my future and this kind of, you know, opened my up to the possibility of using the educator side and maybe pursuing that aspect, you know, maybe becoming a faculty member somewhere or an adjunct or something.

P3 I2: So there was like a bunch of like little policies that was like going and being up for vote when I was just a regular member and I agreed with some of them and I didn't agree with others and I said to myself, "how can I kind of really manipulate this situation where I can have more of an influence over what policies are being made and all that." And I was like "I know, I could be secretary," because that was the only position I felt comfortable with at that time, like oh you know it's not too much of a leadership role but still it is a leadership role and I'll be, you know, part, one of five members that is able to really, you know, influence the entire organization.

P3 I3: that was something that I didn't really think was going to have an impact on me until I started going through the Ph.D. Program and really finding out what entails to be like a Counselor Educator, Supervisor, all these different kinds of roles and duties that inherently we all have in the counseling field but there not very, they weren't very blatant or explained to me or emphasized or encouraged, it was pretty much kind of ignored, you know, Oh well nobody likes to do research and nobody does research and you know, you have no control over any kind of movement of the profession, and you know now I see those roles are accessible and doable for all of us and that they are important as a profession in general.

P3 I3: I feel like I am more well-rounded educator, supervisor and counselor. I think my experiences from my developmental years, when I just identified myself as a counselor role, kind of like fit into my new role, just because I can apply all the stuff that I'm learning now to how the current system is. You know, my experiences from the mental health agency that I came from, I already know how that system works and what it lacks and what it doesn't lack and you know that is all my old identity and with my new

identity, I have all the other aspects of you know the Counselor Educator and Supervisor. So it always gives me like a frame of, like a point of view

P3 I3: you know, that it would tend to, the way that it's set-up, the hybrid, you know program, encouraged me every day and changed me every day because I could mingle them, you know, both of them together, like professional work and then my school work. And then, you know, they would both intermingle with one another.

P4 I3: My previous identity with the one I have now...I would say that they were very closely related, once again, because of the aspect of teaching that you do. I think that every person might be unaware, but everybody teaches somebody something.

P5 I2: But the counselor educator, as far as teaching, really didn't happen for me until I knew I needed to do that as a component of my internship site, my internship process and I taught a class and I loved it and so, if I hadn't had that experience of, we have this internship and at least fifty hours of it has to be teaching, I'm not sure that I would have gotten to this place that I'm at now.

P5 I2: Well the supervisory role was a fairly comfortable transition for me because I had actually taken a break after I volunteered, um, after I finished my internship and so I hadn't been part the agency for I think a couple of years and yet I knew everybody and they were very welcoming and so like I felt like I slipped pretty easily into the role of taking on a couple of individual supervisees and, um, then co-leading a group supervision process, again with a trusted colleague. And so that transition for me was fairly effortless and felt very natural.

P5 I2: Well it was pivotal in that I had not even thought of myself as necessarily a counselor educator, ah...supervisor, yes, but not a counselor educator, nor had I even considered looking for a job as either an adjunct or a fulltime professor anywhere. So that piece of my professional identity was newly hatched with the prospect of having to force myself to teach

P5 I3: I think that my initial singular identity coming into the program limited some of my, um, early prospects in terms of just really how I identified but then through the process of the coursework and especially the internship experience, I was able to feel comfortable enough with the skills I was gaining as a supervisor...I also had done the AAMFT, XXXX did the thirty hour supervision training and so I did that I think just after the two terms of supervision and advanced supervision, so it was a nice reinforcing of the coursework and gave me a lot more confidence then going into supervision as a component of internship.

P5 I3: The clinician identity, um, I believe that it fit and continues to fit very well. I believe the richer someone's experience as practicing clinician is, the richer their

contribution to supervision and to teaching can be, because supervisees and students hunger for the real life examples and they tend to connect so much better with the professor's or the supervisor's experiences and the relating of those experiences rather than just talking out of a textbook.

P5 I3: then last but not least was the richness of the research piece that I could never really have imagined that I would first of all choose to do research and then actually enjoy it...was just so surprising for me that all of the aspects of our development as a counselor educator through this hybrid model...well they forced me to be self-reliant and to make things happen in ways that I've done in my life but never that were this connected to my professional identity.

P6 I2: Again, I don't think it was a definitive moment of "I can do it," it was more in my mind, it was like, "I really like this" and it's fairly compatible with, you know, who I identify myself as.

P6 I3: I think so, that probably happened maybe before my hybrid program when I, after I taught a few/several classes, after I got really good evaluations and feedback from students and got recognized by other faculty, I think that helped. In the hybrid program, it was maybe was the publication of a few things, it was that continued positive feedback. But, yea, I think it's safe to say, I like how you put that, that that applies to me as well.... I can't say that it's made me exponentially a better teacher but I can say it's made me exponentially a better writer and researcher.

P7 I1: so I can kind of keep pushing myself and kind of, continue reflecting. Um...I don't know, I'm, I'm proud of where I've gone so far but I feel like there is a lot of work to be done and I think I mentioned last time that we spoke that, if I ever get to a point where I don't feel like I need to continue...working, I, I think that's a problem (laughter). I think...counseling is kind of this constant self-improvement.

P7 I2: I think once I realized that there were so many commonalities, I just became more confident in what I already kind of knew instinctually, from my own experience and from my education as well. Um, and then instead of worrying about what I might not know, I started kind of, um, put my energy towards the stuff that I was already really passionate about because ...built my identity around that a little bit more and allowed myself that space, which I was afraid to do before.

P7 I1: my thoughts regarding counseling and counselor education in general are much more developed that they were, you know, three or four years ago . I, I think I'm very much in the process of still learning though, um ...I find myself kind of craving interactions with other professionals...

P7 I2: So, um, during the program I made kind of a couple of really interesting professional changes that were kind, of a long time coming, but. When I first applied for the program I was running a clinic and during the time that I was in the program I actually left my clinic and went to teaching fulltime and then it transitioned from a fulltime teaching position to a tenured track position.

P7 I3: When I entered the program that was the first time that I really thought about professional identity and the fact that I kind of had a little bit control over who I am as a professional. Once again, we talked previously about how I changed professional positions over the years... And so, I think the combination of changing professional positions and then really kind of being asked to reflect upon my identity, gave me a catalyst to do so. So I would say prior to the program I really didn't have an identity, I just kind of had...kind of a natural work ethic and expectations of myself and then really formalized expectations of myself professionally as I reviewed different theories. I kind of applied them to the work that I did and really considered what work I did that I found valuable and kind of what I wanted to retain as I grew as a professional.

P7 I3: I would say, my being seen as, is more generic, it was more like, I'm being seen as a competent professional or I'm being seen as an effective educator, or I'm being seen as, um, knowledgeable. I don't think I necessarily ever applied that label of counselor educator. I think in my mind it was broken down into different qualities of the counselor educator.

P8 I2: But I definitely remember that oh yeah, okay...because for a while I was very much the student, you know like I've always been, in classes and learning and yes I wanted to be the person who was teaching and guiding other people and all that and at some point it was like "yeah okay, I'm going to transition over I can see myself doing it now.

P8 I2: for my whole life at various points I've been a student. I've got that part down pat, you sit in a desk and you listen and you do what they tell you and turn in the assignments. But, um, then it was like, oh okay, then I'm going to be the one who is helping other people learning to be counselors and, um, I have the, I will have the ability to do that. I'm learning...I have learned the things that I need to do to equip other people to do this. It was, like I said, exciting and confidence building and sort of a turn if you will, it was like okay, yes!

P8 I2: And I remember prior to that, thinking how do you ever get to the point where you do feel like you have the expertise and the ability to be able to teach other people, you know, I guess, in a formal kind of way. We are all teaching each other all the time, but, you know in a formal way, enough that somebody would hire me to do that , that I would

feel confident and comfortable doing that . And then like I said, at some point and I wish that I could tell you what it was that happened, maybe it was just a process?

P8 I2: Um, probably as I started working with masters level students, um, in teaching, as I was doing my internship I was teaching some classes, so I was in a different position, than I had been before. And then, as I worked directly in a supervisory role with the masters level school counseling students, um...I felt more ah, more like a counselor educator than a school counselor... it became more real I suppose is, is what it was . It wasn't just, I was reading about, again, more counseling stuff or thinking ok, there's my professor up there in the front of the class and...you know, that's, he's teaching me and I'm learning from him, but all of a sudden it was like, wow I can do that too...

P8 I3: my vision of the whole process from the beginning was that I was a School Counselor, a leader in my school, um, I was very familiar with, you know, all the techniques and theories and all that stuff and I was using them but, in the role that I was reaching for, I was going to be teaching other people how to do that. So it was an evolution of a role identity in that I was moving from the person who was using it to becoming the person who was going to teach others how to use all these things.

P8 I3: I see it as sort of layers... The School Counselor is directly in-touch with the students, the parents and teachers and all of that in the school building whereas, the Counselor Educator is training the would be School Counselors to go out to school buildings and work with those people. So, they're definitely related to each other and if I had not been a School Counselor, I'm sure that I would not even begin to know how to tell somebody else the things that might work or not work.

P8 I3: at that point there were students who were looking to me for education, whereas, prior to that I was the one looking to my instructors for education. So I sorta, I did switch roles, well at that point, I was still the student, I was also becoming a Counselor Educator... On the other side it's like, "wow, I really did that! I did change and yea, here I am now."

P9 I2: And so when my supervisees have a success or they get a certain concept all of a sudden or they make a breakthrough with a case using an intervention that I showed them a while back, I feel like "oh, maybe what I am doing is working."

P9 I3: I think...somehow I have internalized it and then gotten to the point where I actually am teaching and feel like yes, I'm in the midst of actually being a counselor educator...the professional identity part of it happened before the first day that I stepped into the classroom, um, and some of it was through learning like actual skills like in a class and some of it was talking to people in my cohort and hearing about their experiences and then saying like I've done some of those things too, or, um, just starting to really understand how transferable my other skills just a professional were.

P9 I3: I was identifying as a clinician before I came into the program, so, just a really strong identity as a professional counselor and of course that's all part of who I am and that helps me, I think, be a better counselor educator, supervisor, researcher, anything...because for me, that's really the base of where it all comes from. So, and I've really gotten to grow that piece of it to, but having it before I came in, it just really, it's been an essential part, I think. So that fact that it was already there was really helpful and it was the real source of strength that I drew from all this time and added on to. It was kind of my lens for looking at everything too.

The following diagram represents the final conceptual diagrams from the third round of interviews.

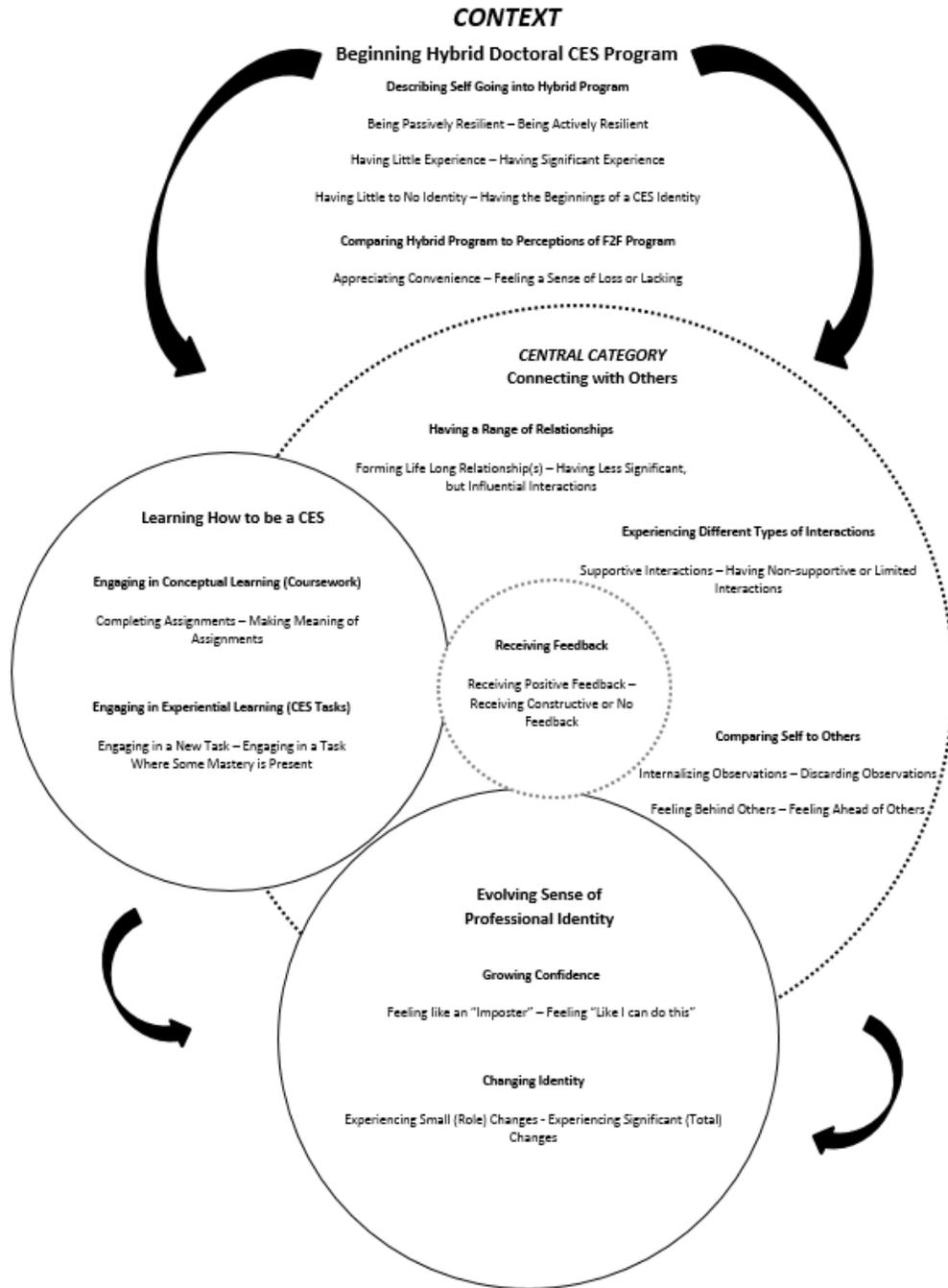


Diagram 4. Conceptual Diagram of Categories, Properties, and Dimensions From Third Round of Interviews.

## Discussion

Based on the data collected from the third round of interviews the emerging theory of the professional identity development of doctoral students in a hybrid CES program was solidified. The theory includes four main categories, the context which is Beginning Hybrid Doctoral Program, Learning How to be a CES, Connecting with Others, and Evolving Sense of Professional Identity. In brief summary, within the context of a hybrid CES doctoral program, participants engaged in conceptual and experiential learning, connected with others to form supportive relationships, were able to make comparisons and received feedback. Through this process participants expressed that their confidence grew and their professional identity evolved toward becoming a CES. Participants experienced their growing confidence differently, based on the status of their identity and the degree of CES experience they had prior to starting their hybrid doctoral program. Growing confidence was less affected when participants already had some mastery of the tasks associated with being a CES or had significant professional and life experience, therefore they experienced less self-doubt, anxiety and feeling like an “imposter”, than those participants who entered their hybrid program with little to no CES experience. As participants described their professional identity developing, they described it in terms of the particular tasks/roles being mastered; teaching, supervising, leadership and scholarship. As the roles became mastered and synthesized, participants described their identity evolving as a whole, as a Counselor Educator and Supervisor.

The next step in this study was to draft a document that was comprehensive, yet succinct of the PID theory that emerged and present it to the participants in the form of a member check. This step was a change to the initial study design and was approved by

the IRB in July 2014. The approved study design change allowed for the member check to be conducted by email and gave participants 7 days to review and respond.

### **Member Check**

Essentially a member check is the action of taking emergent ideas, concepts, theory development back to the source, generally participants, to allow them an opportunity to confirm or refute that the essence of their experience is being captured. A succinct summary of the emergent theory of the experience participants had of their professional identity development as CES in their doctoral hybrid program was drafted. Along with the summary of the theory, an abbreviated version of the definitions of the theories categories, properties and dimensions was crafted, as well as two visual diagrams of the theory; one representing the conceptual and one the process aspect of the theory. Collectively, these documents represented the member check that was sent to all of the participants. Participants were given seven days to review the member check and provide feedback as to whether the experience was represented within the PID theory. The following questions were posed to the participants to use as a guide as they provided feedback:

- How does the overall structure of the theory fit with your professional identity development experience in your hybrid doctoral program?
- Do you agree with the major categories/themes identified in the theory?
- Is there something that you would add to better represent your experience?

The following represents the feedback received by the participants regarding the theory member check:

**Participant 2** – Replied by email and wrote “I did read the member check and indeed the theory emerging from your study fit my experience as a student in a hybrid doctoral program. I love the way you grafted the theory.” No other feedback was offered.

**Participant 4** – Replied by email and while she did not disagree with the findings of the study about professional identity development, she did express some concern in that the “underlying message that a hybrid CES program is not as beneficial as an on-ground program” was being conveyed.

**Participant 5** – Replied by email and wrote “...and you did a lovely job of capturing a ton of complicated, interconnected information!! I have no criticisms or corrections...” No other feedback was offered.

**Participant 6** – Sent the following feedback by email: “I have had an opportunity to look through your material - really cool stuff and great job! Yes, I feel that your model adequately describes my experience. Conceptually it appears to hit on all of the developmental areas that are consistent with hybrid programs.”

**Participant 7** – Provided the following feedback by email, “I think the overall structure fits my experience as do the categories. The ONLY thing that caught my eye/rubbed me the wrong way was towards the beginning when you described the context of an emerging professional identity. You talked about how people had no identity, a singular identity as a clinician, and then some developed into a CES identity. When I read this, it seems to suggest that CESs are somehow superior to those whom are ‘just’ clinicians. For whatever reason, that implication bothers me. While my identity as a CES developed a lot in the context of the program, I would say that I still see my ‘clinician’ identity and ‘counselor educator’ identities as separate, yet complimentary. I don’t know that one

leads into the other, etc.” The as noted by the participant, the only concern was over wording within the description of the context describing how participants identified their identity at the beginning of their hybrid program. The descriptions made by participants were essentially having no identity, having a singular identity and having the beginning of a CES identity. She felt that the wording might imply that having a CES identity was somehow superior. This will be made clearer in the study because the intent was not to have a hierarchy to the identities, just a list indicating the state of the participants identity as the started their identity program.

**Participant 8** – Responded to the member check by writing “I must say that my experience matches that of your theory. I agree with the major themes and ideas in the theory. I don't have anything else that I think should be included to better represent my view.”

On the seventh day, a second email was sent to the participants reminding them of the member check. Ultimately only four of the participants responded to the member check. All three participants provided minimal feedback and all affirmed that their experience was represented in the theory.

**Participant 9** – Responded to each question with some specific feedback. In general she felt that her experience fit within the emergent theory. In her affirmation she further stated, “I do. Particularly the central theme of connecting with others. Entering the program I never would have thought that connections would be such a key piece of the experience and my professional identity development. I considered the program something that would add to my skill set and make additional professional opportunities available. I never realized how difficult and transformative the process would be and how

heavily I would need to rely on my connections with others to grow, understand my skills better, and see myself differently. While I wouldn't have thought this would emerge, I feel it fits after exploring my journey in this process and seeing the theory articulated as a whole.” She also shared that reading through the theory “also helped me to understand my own process and journey in a more articulated way”.

At the conclusion, seven out of nine participants responded to the member check. While most did not provide any lengthy feedback, all of them did affirm that their experiences were represented in the emergent theory. The possible reason for the brevity of responses could possibly be that it does require more work than a phone conversation on part of the participants. There is a significant difference between having a 30 to 45 minute conversation versus reading a five page document, reviewing two diagrams and then answering a couple of questions. Participant 9 did respond and emphasized that going into the program she did not understand how much connecting with others would be critical to her evolving professional identity experience, but after participating in this study, reflecting on her experience, and reading the theory itself, she felt it fit her experience. Overall of significant importance is that those who responded were in agreement that the theory captured their experiences.

## **Appendix L**

### **Participant Narratives Derived From all Three Interview Rounds**

#### **Participant 1**

##### **Beginning Hybrid Doctoral Program (Context)**

Participant 1 stated that she had 6 years of counseling experience and held a LCPC prior to entering her hybrid doctoral program. She included as her theoretical orientation CBT and Solution Focused. When asked about her professional identity entering the program she identified her identity as just a counselor. Through the course of the three interviews she also indicated that she had decided prior to finishing her Masters degree that she was going to pursue her doctorate in Counselor Education and within three months of graduating she was in a CES program.

While P1 did not have any prior CES experience before entering her hybrid doctoral program, she did have significant transferrable experience as she was a religious instructor with her church. When asked about any personal characteristics that she had that helped her during her experience developing her professional identity, she stated one time that she was a people person. Though that was not as useful in a hybrid format, she was able to use them in development significant relationship, specifically with her mentor. She also agreed that resilience was a critical personal quality that was needed to get through her hybrid program. She believes resilience is something that you are born with and it is difficult to get otherwise. She also indicated she had friends who did not have resilience and they could not complete a hybrid program.

P1 questioned significantly her experience in the hybrid program. On more than one occasion she indicated that she thought her experience would have been different. She indicated that she thought she would have had more access to faculty, teaching opportunities and mentoring and that in general she would have had a fuller experience. She also indicated that she appreciated the flexibility of the hybrid program and that she was self-motivated and would have gotten frustrated in a traditional classroom.

##### **Learning How to Be A CE**

P1 did not focus on the conceptual learning piece, but emphasized the experiential learning aspect of her learning experience. She indicated that her work learning to teach, or being a TA, was critical to building her confidence and her identity as a CES. She taught on two occasions for her programs residencies, which can last between 8 to 10 days. While teaching she realized that her past experience was of value to her teaching counseling and because of this this task was not as complex. Her confidence increased rather quickly with positive feedback from both faculty and students.

P1 also gained experience working with a local hospice organization. She did some presentation work on hospice and palliative care. This was part of her internship, it again increased her confident and connected her to the community. She was being seen as a CES, and they asked her to continue on after her internship as a volunteer.

P1 also expressed that she had a moment while supervising students that she could actually “do this” that she was “capable”.

### **Connecting With Others**

P1 describes that getting connected with others and being able to network with faculty and finding a mentor was critical to her experience as she developed her professional identity as a CES. She ended up finding a mentor who has helped and encouraged her through PID process and hybrid program. Her mentor has encouraged her and expressed that she is needed in the profession. Her mentor has served as a role model and has demonstrated how to teach and how to complete her work in an efficient and effective manner. Her mentor has also given her constructive feedback about not doing the work for her classmates when they fail to show up fully. P1 also stated that she had influential interactions during her internship. She provided an example of giving her first presentation and getting feedback from an expert in the field. She stated that that feedback was a great learning experience.

P1 described many of her relationships and interactions as positive, but she did have a negative experience during one of her residencies. She stated that she was paired with a faculty member and there was a personality conflict between the two of them. She had to rise above it and in the end she received positive feedback from student, but she said that negative experience negatively impacted her PID.

She also cited initially comparing herself to faculty she was teaching with and wanting to be like them. She saw this person and how they were teaching and wanted to emulate them. This was also another example of a positive interaction that had a positive effect on PID. In her interactions with others and through building and maintaining relationship, feedback was a critical component. She stated that getting feedback from students a faculty assured her, gave her added confidence that she could actually “do this”. The constructive feedback she received from her mentor was also helpful to her learning and development as a CES. She also stated that feedback was “really necessary in a hybrid program because you don’t have that constant contact with professors”.

### **Evolving Sense of Professional Identity**

P1 described her professional identity development in both forming or transitioning in aspects and in total. Her primary focus was on the teaching aspect of her identity development. This seemed more relevant to her, in that P1 did not appear interested in pursuing clinical or supervision work. She cited throughout each interview that she experienced initial anxiety, feeling of being inept and self-doubt. Her confidence grew as she interacted and observed her lead faculty, was able to actually start teaching and then got feedback from both faculty and students. She started to feeling as though she was being seen as a CES, and that she could actually become a CES. It is through interactions with faculty, her mentor and receiving feedback that P1’s confidence grew. She cited that connecting with other counselor educators and having her skills and abilities affirmed that she had a calling to be an educator.

P1 also cited having a specific moment when she felt when she realized her identity was changing. She describes a moment at home doing research and reflecting on her experiences

and thinking she “can actually do this, this is real”. She also attributes this moment to the positive teaching experience she had at one of residencies.

## **Participant 2**

### **Beginning Hybrid Doctoral Program (Context)**

Participant 2 did have supervision experience prior to entering her hybrid doctoral program. She did not cite having any direct teaching, or leadership experience, but did say she conducted research in her undergraduate program. However, she did have significant transferable experience in the area of teaching as she was a State trainer for a number of years. P2 cites that her experience prior to coming into the program was not only a factor in her decision to become a counselor educator, it did impact her identity development. Because of her experience coming into her hybrid program, she already felt confidence in the teaching area even though her experience wasn't direct.

P2 cited her previous identity was a counselor, but focused specifically on the theoretical aspects of her identity, that of being humanistic in nature following the tenets of Carl Rogers. During the course of the data collection, P2 stated that her previous identity did impact her developing identity as a CES in that it strengthened her evolving identity, implying that it was still part of her identity as it was evolving.

During the interviews, P1 stated that she had several personal characteristics that aided her as she was in her hybrid program and developing her professional identity as a CES. She stated that she was a quick learner and that she did her research. She stated this was very helpful as she learned to navigate the online learning environment. She also felt that being resilient was a good descriptor for her experience. P2 stated that English was her second language and because of that she needed to be resilient in order to push through and continue. She said she took feedback and made improvements. She said the most difficult part for her was learning and writing in APA style.

Through the interview it was clear that who she was, personal characteristics, experience, and previous identity, impacted her experience in her hybrid program and her evolving professional identity as a CES.

P2 stated that the hybrid program has been a positive experience and that at first she was skeptical that she would not have a very good experience because it was online, but she says that has not been the case. She has appreciated the quality of the program and the support she has received.

### **Learning How to Be A CE**

P2 expressed that conceptual learning was a part of her evolving identity as a CES. She specifically cited learning about APA when writing and conducting research and also mention learning more about the various theoretical approaches. She said she has now incorporated phenomenology and constructivism in her framework due to conceptual learning. Doing the course work for P2 was more about making meaning of the assignments.

P2 emphasized the experiential learning piece of her PID process. The experiential learning that seemed to be the most impactful to P2 was the teaching she did during her residency programs. She said the feedback she got was instrumental to her growing her identity. Though she had significant training experience in the past, and came into the program knowing she wanted to teach, the experience along with the feedback solidified it for her. Based on her past experience, P2 did have a little mastery regarding teaching, and through the interviews, it seemed as though the learning curve was not as steep for her, though she did express some anxiety about it prior to receiving positive and encouraging feedback.

### **Connecting With Others**

During the interviews P2 expressed having a range of relationships with others. She stated that her family was a big influence on her and her ability to successfully complete the hybrid program. P2 stated that she has been able to connect with other students all of the world because of the online nature of the program, and because of that she has felt a sense of community.

She also cites that the faculty relationships she had were critical to her experiences, specifically with the feedback they gave her. She stated she had one faculty member in particular has had the most impact, He gave her feedback at the beginning of her program feedback that she saved and still refers to at the present time. She keep in touch with this faculty and update him on her progress. P2 cites that most. If not all of her interaction were supportive.

P2 does not cite that she compared herself to others, but in her attending conferences, there is a sense that she was comparing herself to others and a feeling of measuring up or being legitimized by what she observed.

Overall, P2 two cites her relationship and the feedback that she received, both positive and constructive were important to her professional identity development. She used words like solidified, strengthened and validated her.

### **Evolving Sense of Professional Identity**

Because P2 entered the program with some confidence based on her significant experience as a clinician, supervisor, and trainer. P2 did not express a lot of self-doubt at the beginning. She did express some anxiety prior to engaging in teaching at her first residency, but with feedback her confidence grew. When she talked about her identity development, P2 spoke, spoke mostly about her identity as a CES in total. She did not often break down her identity in the various roles or aspects, talked about her identity as a whole.

### **Participant 3**

#### **Beginning Hybrid Doctoral Program (Context)**

P3 entered his hybrid doctoral program having only counseling experience. He considered himself to be an addictions counselor, and nothing more. He said that he considered that his identity as a counselor as a frame, point of view, or foundation to his evolving identity. He stated that he did not have any teaching, supervision, leadership or research experience prior to entering his doctoral program. He said one of the primary reasons he wanted to get into a doctoral program is to provide the support and guidance to new counselors that he did not receive when he entered the field. Not having previous experience in what is typically thought of as CES roles, did not seem to hinder his identity development, he said learning about these roles he felt empowered.

Personal characteristics that P3 has that helped him during his hybrid program and with his identity development are that he is laid back. He does not easily get overwhelmed and is adaptable. He stated that he would watch fellow classmate get upset with assignments, whether there was too much work to do, or if there was disagreement with an assignment, while he would just map it out and get it done. He also agreed that being resilient was an important characteristic. He said that he had resilience coming into the program and it has helped him continue, even though the work can be exhausting. He can shift priorities and do what he has too to get it done.

Who P3 was coming into the program impacted his identity development. He only had experience as a counselor coming into the program, so his learning curve was a bit steeper when it came to learning and doing the various CES roles. His personal characteristics play a role in his development too.

#### **Learning How to Be A CE**

P3 put emphasis on the conceptual learning that he experienced. He said that he felt like he was already becoming a CES with the first course that he took. He said he learned a lot about the various roles of a CES, and about the history of the profession. This new knowledge gave him a different perspective about the counseling profession and a sense of pride. He said he was later able to make meaning out of some of the information he was learning about leadership when he took on a leadership role in a local professional organization.

P3 said the experiential learning that had a great impact on him was the teaching experiences he had at one of his residencies. He was assigned with a faculty member who taught within a theoretical framework that he was not familiar with. At first the feedback the faculty member gave him made him standoffish and humbled him. Once he opened up to her feedback he learned a lot and started to understand the teaching role better. He said that it was that experience that really made him think he might pursue a faculty position someday. In this instance P3 had no mastery in any of the roles, except counselor, that are typically associated with being a CES. His learning curve was steep. P3 did not site having significant anxiety or self-

doubt about his abilities even though he did not have prior CES experience. This may be due in part to the fact that he describes himself as being laid back.

### **Connecting With Others**

Connecting with others was an important aspect of P3's experience. He said connecting with the faculty during the residency was important to his identity development in that it helped him to feel that what he was doing was achievable and obtainable. He said that in general he connected with a group a faculty that really made him feel welcomed. He said that these faculty gave him their home phone numbers and personal email addresses that really made P3 feel as though they were being sincere. P3 did cite one faculty member in general as having a significant impact on his identity development. This faculty member was very accomplished but still was very interested not only in P3's long term goals, but also in asking his professional opinion on counseling matters. P3 emphasized once of the biggest impacts on his growing confidence and his identity development was the kind of interactions he had with faculty. He said the absence of interaction prior to the residencies had a negative impact on him because he felt isolated and disconnected. He said the interaction he had with faculty that were the most supportive were those that were more collegial. He said being treat as an equal, or almost and equal, really made him feel like he belonged and that he could accomplish his Ph.D.

In a way, through his interactions with faculty and feeling as though the relationship was more collegial, he was comparing himself and feeling as though he measured up. He cited a sense of belonging or being accepted.

Feedback for P3 was received both positively and constructively. Feedback played an important part on his identity development. The constructive feedback he cites as coming from the faculty that he co-instructed with was humbling, but in the end taught him a lot about teaching and how he was going to teach. It also opened him up to the idea of becoming a faculty member somewhere, something that he had not previously considered. P3 also received a lot of positive feedback, and a lot of it was more informal. This feedback was more the sense that he was welcomed and accepted into the community. This was done through the supportive interactions he had with faculty at his residencies that he characterized as more personal and collegial. He also stated that others were seeing him in a different light once they knew he was in a Ph.D. program by asking him for his advice and opinion on professional issues. This made him feel validated as an evolving CES.

### **Evolving Sense of Professional Identity**

P3's growing confidence stems from his relationships with others. The faculty ha met and built relationships with. Feeling accepted by the CES community and that his goals were obtainable. His self-doubt seems to stem mostly from whether or not he would be accepted. Once he felt accepted, his confidence grew. His confidence also grew with all of the information he received in his program and then by applying the knowledge in his real life. He felt through his interactions he was being seen as a CES.

When talking about his identity development, P3 talked about in both the various roles and in total. He talked about the roles of teaching, supervision and leadership (P3 had not

started on his dissertation, so this might be the reason for not talking about research). He talked about his teaching experience and how he was excited about possibly pursuing that aspect of being a CES. He talked about how he had started to take on supervisee's and described how he was mentoring the. He also talked about how through learning about the role of leadership through his coursework, he took on a leadership role in local professional organization. All of these things have led to his growing confidence and the development of his professional identity. When talking about his evolving identity in total, he talked about mainly in conjunction with his relationship with others.

#### **Participant 4**

##### **Beginning Hybrid Doctoral Program (Context)**

P4 expressed feeling that her professional identity was mixed prior to entering her hybrid doctoral program. She said that she had an undergrad degree in social work and a Masters in rehabilitation. She felt she needed more education. Through the interviews, P4 did not have a very strong professional identity coming into her hybrid program. However, she does think that her previous professional identity, and her forming identity as a CES are related or connected, specifically because of the teaching aspect that she feels is part of bot identities.

Prior to coming into her hybrid program, P4 did not have any classroom teaching experience, but she said she did have supervision experience and leadership experience. She stated that this previous experience did impact her identity development once she was in the program in a positive way, though she was not able to really articulate how. She did state that she thought her supervision and leadership skills have gotten better.

P4 said that the personal characteristic that she had that were the most useful were her people skills. She said that she has been told she is accessible, listens well and easy to talk to. She thought this was helpful when she received feedback from faculty. When asked about if she felt she needed to be resilient, she said that she did not think anything was difficult about the program and that it was fun. However, she did express previously that she had difficulty with technology in another program, and though the institution was very supportive, she ultimately quit due to the frustration, yet she enrolled in the program that she was currently in. This demonstrates a certain amount of resiliency.

Prior to entering the program, P4 was very positive about the hybrid program and her feelings about the online program have remained positive. She has liked the accessibility and flexibility of the program. Her experience has been that she has been able to connect with both faculty and other student much better that she was when she was in a traditional F2F program.

##### **Learning How to Be A CE**

P4 has cited that conceptual learning was an important part of her identity development as a CES. She said many of her classes had an identity development component that was very helpful to her own identity development. She also cites that learning about APA style of writing was also very helpful.

P4 did not emphasize experiential learning as much as she did conceptual learning. Her experiential learning seems to center mostly around the additional training and educational opportunities she got from the conferences and workshops she attended. P4 expressed being very involved in continuing education prior to going into a hybrid doctoral program.

### **Connecting With Others**

P4 does cite that connecting with others at the program's residencies had the biggest impact on her identity development as a CES. She cites being around others at the residencies allowed her to learn more about the program and about the profession. She stated she found the faculty to be very accomplished and that the whole experience was very motivating. She also said that some of her interactions at the residency were less positive. She encountered a few students that she felt were "snobby". She stated that these less positive interactions impeded her identity development.

When looking at the relationships she cultivated with others, she said that she could not point to one that was the most impactful, she said there were like 5 or 6. She said she made a point to develop a relationship with someone in each class. She said when you are "doing online, you really need to have someone that you can call and to talk to things about."

P4 did not express that comparing herself to others was part of her direct experience, but she did express that by going to the residency and observing others she felt that the faculty was so accomplished and that she felt motivated, this lends itself to comparing self to others.

The feedback that P4 cited as having the biggest impact on her was the feedback she received from faculty regarding APA. She really appreciated feedback associated to her writing. She also expressed that faculty treated her as almost equals and that she got a message from that that she was "valuable" and that her "opinion counts". This informal feedback was important to her identity development.

### **Evolving Sense of Professional Identity**

P4 did not express a lot of self-doubt about becoming a CES. She had a lot of real life experience coming into her hybrid program and she was confident in her abilities to become a CES. She did say that the connection with others and the feedback she received aided in her identity development over all and she thought moving closer to obtaining her Ph.D. was helpful to her self-esteem.

When talking about her evolving identity as a CES, P4 talked about it in total. Though as she talked about her evolving identity it was clear that her main goal was to be an educator.

## **Participant 5**

### **Beginning Hybrid Doctoral Program (Context)**

P5 entered her hybrid doctoral program stating that her identity was that of a clinician. Her identity was singular in that she worked with individuals, couples and families as a

counselor. She thought that her identity as a counselor may have negatively impacted her evolving identity as a CES, because going into her hybrid program, she was really only interested in the credential and continuing with private practice and doing some supervision. She entered the program not having any prior teaching, supervision, leadership, or research experience. She said not having this experience going into the program was probably beneficial as she did not have any preconceived notions of how any of these roles should be.

She felt that she had personal characteristics that help her in her hybrid program and as she developed her identity development. She cited that having a grasp of technology was very helpful, being a little older and mature was helpful, and following through and being able to persevere was helpful too. She thought being resilient was a “brilliant” descriptor of her experience. She felt that getting through the program where there was no nurturing, and little structured support, being resilient was necessary.

P5 expressed being appreciative of the benefits of a hybrid program in that she did not have to relocate her family and still pursue a Ph.D. She stated that she saw cohort mates do remarkable life events, get married, travel the world, have babies, and never have to leave or take a break from the program. She also felt that the program was not very nurturing or supportive in a few ways and wondered, several times, what it would have been like to have been in a F2F program, implying that she thought it might be more nurturing and supportive.

#### **Learning How to Be A CES**

P4 expressly stated that the conceptual learning aspect of her hybrid program was “not terribly deep and meaningful, certainly not in the way” that she experienced in her masters program, however she cited that the experiential learning aspect of her program was critical to her identity development as a CES.

P5 talked about her experience with becoming a supervisor. She said she had a “trusted colleague” to role model from and that this transition was fairly easy from her. She said undertaking the teaching aspect of a CES identity was filled with self-doubt and anxiety at first. She said when she finally taught she fell in love with it and it opened her eyes to actually pursuing a faculty position at some point. She said the feedback that she received from the student evaluations, from her advisor, and the fact that she was invited back to teach, were all positive affirmations that helped evolve her identity. She also said that during this time she presented at conference, and while the first time was not as positive as she would have liked, she learned from that experience and presented again and the second time was successful. P5 also talked about her evolving identity as a researcher. She said this was another surprise to find out that she liked to do research. It was through P5’s experiential learning that she was able to learn, sometime through trial and error, and grow into her evolving identity as a CES.

#### **Connecting With Others**

P5 cites her relationship with some of her cohort mates and with her advisor as being the most important relationships during her hybrid program. She expressed that she formed a strong bond with one particular cohort member and through this relationship, P4 describes

being able to vicariously learn about school counseling and ultimately more about academia and being a CES. This relationship is cited as being a lifelong friendship. P5 Also developed significant relationships with other cohort members, and stated that through their support and encouragement she was able to pass oral comps. She said there was also a sense that if she didn't continue on that she would be letting some of her cohort mates down. P5's relationship with her advisor also seemed to be another life-long relationship. She cited that her advisor provide feedback and encouragement that was important to her progress and identity development.

In general P5 had positive interactions that aided her growth as a CES. However there was one interaction with a faculty member that was not as positive. It was not that the faculty member was negative, there was some questions about his competency. This interaction was considered a negative experience and hampered identity development, in that it did not help learning the course material and it did not provide a role model to observe from.

P5 cited that there was inherently a low level of competitiveness between her cohort, in that she compared herself to them as a means of seeing if she measured up. Being able to observe her cohort and watch how they were doing, how they performed, gave P5 a sense of her own progress and sense of identity development. She also said that by observing others, she was able to learn how to teach and supervise. She was able to observe a "trusted colleague" supervise and glean techniques, as well as some dynamic faculty.

Feedback for P5 was instrumental to her experience. The feedback she got from her cohort mates, from her advisor, to the feedback she got by being asked to present a topic at a conference, teach a class and then come back the next semester, were all validating to P5 and moved her along in her identity development.

### **Evolving Sense of Professional Identity**

P5 expressed some feeling of anxiety when she started the program, mainly wondering if she would measure up. She also felt anxiety and self-doubt before she had to teach, a task that she had not performed before. Once she completed the task successfully her confidence grew and she had feeling of being seen as a CES, this was in conjunction with receiving feedback. She had similar experience with the other tasks that she took on, but not to the degree she had with the teaching aspect. When P5 spoke about her evolving identity she spoke about it primarily in the roles associated with being a CES; teaching, supervising, leadership, and research. This might be because she had no previous experience with any of these roles, so taking on each new role was a significant learning experience and she has not had the opportunity to blend them together into one identity yet.

## **Participant 6**

### **Beginning Hybrid Doctoral Program (Context)**

P6 entered the hybrid program with a CES professional identity that was already forming. P6 had been in a previous doctoral program about 10 years ago and finished everything except the dissertation. He has been teaching as an adjunct for about 10 years and he had

significant supervisory experience. Even with all of the experience, P6 claimed that his identity before going into the hybrid program was that of a counselor who liked to teach, not that of a counselor educator. As the interviews progressed, it was clear his CES had already been forming prior to his hybrid doctoral program. Both his identity and previous experience had a direct impact on his identity development as a CES in his hybrid doctoral program P6 came into the program with confidence in his teaching, supervision and leadership abilities. The only area he cited not being as confident with at first was in the area of research.

Personal characteristics that P6 cites as having that were helpful during his hybrid program and continuing to develop his CES identity are internal motivation and persistence. These characteristics helped him to keep continuing on. He said that you need to be internally motivated to keep going when you don't want write that post at 10 PM. You need to be persistent, because there really is "not a whole lot of things that say you can't do this, don't do this...it's all coming from internal". Persistence was a better descriptor for P6's experience than resilience, as he felt resilience had to do more with external forces, and he felt continuing on was all internally driven.

Given the P6 had been in both a land based and hybrid CES doctoral program he had a unique perspective. He expressed the appreciation for the online/hybrid format for the accessibility and flexibility. He also cited that the faculty were much more enthusiastic than he had experienced in his land based program. His only real concern was the lack of interaction on a regular basis, but he felt that the residencies, while they may not have made up for it completely, that the residencies were of good quality and really added to the hybrids experience. He did acknowledge that he had to make a sizeable effort to maintain his relationships, but that it worth it.

### **Learning How to Be A CE**

P6 did not emphasize the conceptual learning in his program. He did mention the emphasis on research and APA though. Because of P6's significant previous experience, the experiential learning was mostly focused on writing and research, as he already had mastery of teaching and supervision. He, along with a small group of peers, presented numerous times as local, state, regional, and national conference. He stated he helped write a chapter for a book and published an article with this same group of individuals. Through these, higher level, CES tasks his confidence continued to grow and his identity further developed.

### **Connecting With Others**

P6 cites that forming significant and life-long relationships was critical to continuing his identity development. Early on, in his second residency he met a small group of peers (student) and a faculty member who served as a mentor. He loosely called this group a cohort. This group stayed in communication and together they were able to present at many conferences, they were able to publish an article and help write a chapter. Additionally, this informal cohort served as a source of ongoing support and encourage for each other. He stated that through texting, email, and Skype they all stay in touch on a weekly basis.

While P6 talked mostly about the positive interactions he had he did state that the lack of regular and consistent interactions that is inherent in an online and hybrid program did hinder his identity development. It was in the presence of others, or working with others that he was able to accomplish so much.

P6 did not cite directly that by comparing himself to others he was able to gauge his progress, the fact that what he was able to do, i.e. numerous presentation, publish...is not common for most CES doctoral student, so by comparison, it is clear he is progressing in his identity development and career as a CES.

P6 acknowledged that feedback was not that important for the areas that he felt he had some mastery in, i.e. teaching and supervision. He stated that feedback was the most important with his writing and scholarship as those were the areas he needed to improve. He appreciated the feedback he got to improve his writing and regarding APA. He also received significant informal or indirect feedback that aided his identity in the form of having proposal at conferences being accepted and having an article being accepted to be published. This is all feedback that enhances a CES's professional identity, and indicates that the identity is forming.

### **Evolving Sense of Professional Identity**

When P6 talked about his growing confidence, again it was only related to his research and writing. His confidence grew with the number of presentation accepted and conducted and the article being published. Also he was in the process of finishing his literature review for his dissertation and he was receiving positive feedback on that too. P6 already felt like he could do the teaching and supervision aspects of being a CES. When he spoke of his evolving identity, he talked about in total, but he placed more emphasis on the writing and researching aspects, due to that was where most of his identity was evolving.

## **Participant 7**

### **Beginning Hybrid Doctoral Program (Context)**

P7 stated that when she entered her hybrid doctoral program she did not feel like she had a professional identity as a counselor or clinician. She said while she had significant experience, she had really never thought about her counselor professional identity before, and it was not emphasize in her earlier education. She felt as though she was at a deficit because of her lack of professional identity. However, P7 entered her hybrid program with a significant amount of experience. She had a lot of clinical experience in a variety of settings and with a variety of populations. She also had a lot of teaching experience and was already an adjunct professor at a university. She also had hybrid student and teaching experience before entering her doctoral program. In a way even though P7 stated that she did not have much of a counseling professional identity coming into her hybrid program, with all of her experience in some ways her professional identity as a CES was already forming.

As far a personal characteristics, P7 expressed that she was a type A personality. She stated she was very organized and motivated. She also felt that being resilient was an important

aspect of being in a hybrid program, though she thought it was probably important to have for graduate work in general.

P7 had experience with both being a student and teaching in a hybrid program before. She had a full understanding of the positives and challenges of being in a hybrid program. Because of this she expressed frustration with some of the faculty whom she thought were not as competent as they needed to be with the online learning platform, and frustration with some of the students that had unrealistic expectations about the program. She also stated that she thought maybe there was a historical stigma associated to online learning, and she wondered if it would be perceived as less than to some people.

### **Learning How to Be a CE**

P7 placed emphasis on the conceptual learning aspect of her education. She indicated that she initially thought that her previous education did not prepare her well for some of the theoretical aspect of counseling. She pointed to a few “well crafted” assignments that really made her think about her identity and how she wanted to be as a professional.

The experiential learning aspect of P7’s experience was really related to her transitioning from fulltime clinician to full time instructor to a tenure track position. This transition from clinician to faculty was a significant step in her career and her identity development. This transition also validated her becoming a CES. While she already had mastery with many of the roles associated with being a CES, she was validated in these roles with her transition from clinician to educator.

### **Connecting With Others**

P7 expressed the most significant relationships that she had that impacted her PID were with her cohort mates. She said that the informal interactions that she had with them, primarily outside of the classroom was very helpful. These interactions were significant and very influential. They gave P7 a chance to learn more about other aspects of the counseling professions, i.e. different parts of the country, different theoretical orientations, and she got a sense that she was not as far behind as she first thought. P7 describes comparing herself to her cohort member and seeing that she had significant clinical and teaching experience that other did not. She was also able to see that because of her experience she was able to more easily apply the theory they were learning in class to her real life experiences where others were not able to. These comparisons helped with P7’s growing confidence and helped her evolving PID as a CES.

P7 describe that some of her interactions with others, specifically faculty did not feel very authentic. She describe experiences when she felt faculty were not prepared for class, or did not spend a lot of time with the material. These type of interactions were not supportive of her identity development. Further feedback that she received that she felt was not authentic or placating also hampered her identity development. P7 described that in these s she “shut down”. P7 describes other feedback that she received from faculty that she respected and that

she though was authentic as helping her PID. Constructive feedback helped foster reflection and positive feedback made her feel as if she was doing well and as if she really was getting it.

### **Evolving Sense of Professional Identity**

P7's growing confidence stemmed from interacting with others, specifically her cohort mates and comparing her progress as a counselor and CES against theirs. She came into the program having some self-doubt primarily about her theoretical knowledge and her experience, but through her interactions began to realize she measured up and in some instance surpassed the people in her cohort. Her growing confidence also was helped by feedback from some key faculty and by her career transition from fulltime clinician to fulltime instructor to tenure track position.

When P7 talked about her identity she talked about mostly as her total identity. This may be because she already had most of the "roles" mastered, so there was no need to think of them individually, so she was already synthesizing them into her total identity.

### **Participant 8**

#### **Beginning Hybrid Doctoral Program (Context)**

P8 described her identity entering her hybrid doctoral program as being a school counselor. She described her identity as being very singular and emphasized that she was not a teacher, though she did do some teaching, she was a school counselor. She did not relay having any specific CES experience before she entered the hybrid program. She had some teaching experience, but not a university/college level, and she did not having any supervision, leadership or research experience.

P8 described a personal characteristic that helped her in her hybrid program and being some on who got things done, and did not procrastinate. She said she wasn't quite sure when she developed that characteristic because she thought she might have procrastinated in the past, but in her hybrid program she did not. That was a helpful characteristic to have, because without the interaction, you can get behind if you are not on top of it. She also thought being resilient was important. She thought the ability to keep going, and not give up was necessary in her hybrid program.

P8 expressed that she felt the F2F interaction that is part of the hybrid was critical to her identity development as a CES. The interactions made the process seem more real and provided her with reinforcement that she needed.

#### **Learning How to Be a CE**

P8 talked about the conceptual aspect of her program in terms of her getting her assignments, completing them and turning in. She indicated that she had a lot of experience with being the student, so she had that part down. It was the experiential learning that had a major impact on P8's identity development. She cited teaching with a faculty member and getting feedback and encouragement was important. She cited experiences where she was teaching Masters level students and seeing that they were understanding the material and

feeling like she was becoming a CES. While she did have transferrable experience teaching as a school counselor, in general P8 did not have mastery of teaching Master level students, especially in a hybrid and/or online learning environment.

P8 also described an interesting parallel process where as she was a student looking toward her faculty for education, and then there were times when she was looked at by Masters students for education as she was the faculty. She described this changing of identity back and forth.

### **Connecting With Others**

P8 describe a couple of significant relationships she had with faculty. She described a faculty that was a supervisor to her when she was doing some teaching during her internship. This faculty member provided support and encouragement and increased P8's growing confidence. P8 described watching this faculty member teach and feeling that she wanted to be able to teach like her.

P8 also described forming relationship with two school counselors that really impacted her identity development. P8 commented on the fact that most of the CES's were from a mental health background and so when she met these two school counselor faculty she really looked up to them as role models. It was very important to see other CESs that came from a school counseling background as part of her identity development process.

P8 also described "bonding" with three other student over an ethic contest that they entered. They bonded over this experience so much that they remained a support system to each other through the reminder of the program. In essence they formed an informal cohort in which they could rely on each other for support and encouragement. These relationship were significant and life-long friendships that were formed.

Aside from observing a faculty teach and wanting to be like her, P8 also shared that going to her first CES conference made her realize that there were a lot of CES and they have probably been there all along. This realization helped P8 feel connected to a community.

Feedback was a critical element to P8's PID experience. She said receiving feedback helped her measure how she was doing. It gave her a sense of progress. She cited positive feedback from a particularly tough instructor as being valuable and made her feeling confident in what she was doing. Feedback that was more informal from students when it looked like they were learning also grew P8's confidence and made her feel more like a CES.

### **Evolving Sense of Professional Identity**

P8 described feeling of self-doubt during her program, as she gained experience, specifically with teaching and she received positive feedback her confidence grew and she felt like she could really become a CES. Her confident also seemed to increase when she became part of a support group of students, and when she met faculty with her area of expertise that she could look up to. When P8 talked about her identity she primarily talked about in total, the

movement from school counselor to CES. However, she was often just referring to the teaching role of the identity, and she was interested in pursuing the career path as an educator.

## **Participant 9**

### **Beginning Hybrid Doctoral Program (Context)**

P9 started the hybrid program stating that her identity was a counselor. She stated that she had a strong counselor identity and she had not starting forming any CES identity at that point. She also stated that she did not have any direct experience with teaching at a college level, with supervising, research or leadership prior to going into the program. She did have some indirect or transferrable experience; she had done some peer training, some adventure education, and substitution teaching. When she entered the program she had a sense that she was a little bit further behind than some of her cohort mates that had some CES experience. However, as she progressed through program she came to realize that the transferrable experience that she had was relevant and valuable. Because a lack of this experience, P9 did experience some anxiety and self-doubt initially.

P9 expressed that some of the personal qualities that she drew upon during her hybrid program was her tenacity, being stubborn and committed. She referred to these characteristics as sources of strength that have helped to continue with the program and not quit.

### **Learning How to Be a CE**

P9 referenced the conceptual learning component of her program and talked about the new knowledge, skills and techniques that she was learning and that she was applying in her professional life. She stated that she felt like her identity was changing as soon as she started the program and began the course work.

P9 emphasized the important of the experiential learning to her. Especially since she did not have mastery in any of the CES roles, except that of a counselor. Since she did not have any direct teaching experience she took the initiative and asked faculty if she could TA for them during a summer session. She said that her request was well received and that she got a couple of upcoming opportunities. P9 also did supervision of Masters level students. She stated that she felt her confidence growing when her supervisee's learning from her, or tried a technique that she taught them. It was also important to her that she connect with the professional community, so she has gone to several conference and observed other CESs and most recently she just had a couple of proposals accepted at a conference. Through her experiential learning she has received positive feedback and her confidence has grown.

### **Connecting With Others**

P9 described having two significant, mentor like relationship that have helped her PID as a CES. Her first mentor is her advisor in her hybrid doctoral program. P9 site him as helping her to realize that her transferrable experience was relevant and valuable. Through his encouragement she feels as though she has everything she need to become a CES; or she already had it within her. She has also asked him more career related questions about what it is

like to be a CES the positives and the challenges. Her other mentor is a faculty member from her Masters program that she has reconnected with. This mentor has been very supportive about career related advice and how she can form specialties and market herself when she is finished. She has also been very supportive to P9 and has encouraged P9 to go to conferences and connect herself with the great counseling community. She said going to these conferences was a great experience for her and really helped with her PID. She was able to observe other CES and see how they interacted and she felt they were role models. This too was a source of confidence in that she said by observing these other CES she knew that she could become one.

P9 has also had a connection with her cohort mates. She said that through this connection she was able to learn more about the profession and to see what others were doing in other parts of the country. She said at first she thought her cohort had a hard time connecting with each other and learning how to give feedback, but in the end they worked it out. She also said that when comparing herself to her peers she initially felt behind and this was a source of anxiety, but now she is learning from them and sees where she ultimately can be.

Feedback played an important role in P9's PID. Feedback from her advisor about her transferrable experience, feedback from her Masters mentor encouraging her to be part of the great CES community, feedback from her students about her supervision skills when her students learn a new skill, and from the profession when they accepted her proposals to present. P9 has felt validated, her confidence has grown and her CES identity is developing.

In general interacting with others was a significant component to P9's PID experiences. It was in the presence of others that P9 felt as though what she was doing was "real"

### **Evolving Sense of Professional Identity**

P9 expressed feeling anxiety and self-doubt during her hybrid program. These feelings were felt mostly at the beginning of the program but did come and go. These feelings were related to not having any direct experience with CES tasks and feeling that she might be behind development compared to her peers. Through her encouraging relationships with others, through engaging in experiential learning, receiving feedback her confidence grew and so did her identity as a CES.

When P9 talked about her identity development she talked about it mostly as a whole; her CES identity. While she did touch on getting teaching experience, and learning to be a supervisor and presenting at a conference, she continued to reference her identity in total.

## **Appendix M**

### **Member Check**

#### **CONTEXT**

The context in which participants experienced their professional identity development was within a hybrid Counselor Education & Supervision doctoral program. The very nature of a hybrid learning format suggests that participants learn course material primarily online with limited face-to-face interaction with faculty and other students. Much of the learning was done outside of the program, and participants needed to find both required and supplemental learning opportunities not provided within the program itself. While many participants expressed their appreciation for the flexibility and accessibility of the hybrid program, they also wondered about the lack of regular contact with faculty and the loss of experiential learning opportunities such as teaching and supervision that are typically part of a traditional land based doctoral program. Several participants initially questioned the quality of their hybrid program, and wondered if others would see their experience as less than.

Participants started their respective doctoral hybrid programs with varying degrees of counselor identity (identity prior to hybrid program) formed and a variety of professional experience established. The range of professional identity that participants stated having as they entered their hybrid programs included not having an identity, to having a singular identity such as being a clinician, to having the beginning of a Counselor Educator & Supervisor (CES) identity. All of the participants were licensed counselors and had considerable clinical experience. Some of the participants also had experience with teaching at a college/university, supervision, and being in a leadership position; all considered aspects of being a CES.

Participants cited having personal characteristics that they could draw from to move forward in their hybrid program and with their professional identity development. While descriptions of these characteristics varied, most centered on some form of resiliency. Resiliency ranged from passive to active as participants described themselves as being laid back, flexible, adaptable, tenacious, and persistent.

The collective context, a hybrid learning format, the participant's previous identity and professional experience, and their resilient nature, all had a direct bearing on how participants experienced their professional identity development as a CES.

#### **PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT THEORY**

Upon entering their hybrid program participants began the process of learning how to be a CES through conceptual learning. Conceptual learning entailed engaging in coursework, usually starting online. The coursework provided information about the history of the counseling profession, the meaning of professional identity, exposure to theory, and guidance about APA writing style. Participants completed assignments as part of their program requirements, and in some instances well-crafted assignments fostered them to make meaning about how new knowledge could be applied to practice. Conceptual learning helped professional identity development by providing context about the profession in general, it explained the various roles of a CES, and set the foundation for experiential learning.

Experiential learning is critical to the professional identity development experience within the context of a hybrid learning format. Experiential learning was defined as engaging in tasks that are typically associated with being a CES; teaching, supervision, leadership, and scholarship. These tasks were mostly performed outside of their hybrid program and the responsibility of the participant to locate. For the participants experiential learning ranged from doing CES tasks not previously done before, to engaging in tasks where some mastery was

already present. These tasks included teaching, supervising Masters level students, attending and presenting at relevant conferences, engaging in leadership opportunities, and writing and publishing.

Experiential learning when coupled with connecting with others and some form of feedback was a key component to the participants evolving professional identity. There was a sense that feedback was even more important because it was not as readily available given the limited face-to-face interaction in the hybrid learning format. Participants received feedback, both positive and constructive. Feedback gave participants a chance to reflect on their experiential learning experience, which impacted their confidence and progressed their identity development. Feedback was interpreted to have a very broad meaning and included evaluative feedback from faculty, but also less formal feedback received from other CESs, other professionals and peers. It also included being asked to return the next semester to teach again, having a proposal accepted at a conference, having a paper/article accepted for publication, being elected into a leadership position for a professional organization, and being promoted to a full time teaching position. Feedback served as a catalyst for feeling validated, being seen as a CES by others, growing confidence, and ultimately for participants evolving professional identity.

In addition to feedback, within connecting with others, having a range of relationships played an instrumental role in the participant's experience developing their professional identity as a CES. Because of the nature of a hybrid program, developing relationships required intentional effort. A repeated experience for the participants in their hybrid program was forming and maintaining a relationship, while only meeting the person once or twice in person, if they ever met at all. These significant and life-long relationships that were formed with faculty, mentors, and other students provided encouragement and support throughout the hybrid program and identity development process. Other relationships that were not life-long, but still proved to be influential provided opportunities to ask questions, and to share and normalize experiences. The range of relationships experienced also included networking at conferences and feeling a sense of professional community. All of these relationships provided support, helped to build confidence and made the experience seem more "real" for participants.

Along with having a range of relationships, the type of interaction experienced played a role in the participant's identity development. Interactions that were considered supportive helped with confidence and identity development. Some participants felt valued and supported when faculty treated them in a more collegial way. Participants stated that becoming a CES seemed more obtainable when they felt there wasn't such a disparity between themselves and faculty. Interactions that were negative were deemed not supportive. Participants shared examples of non-supportive interactions when faculty were unnecessarily challenging, resistant, appeared incompetent, or when fellow students were less than kind. Similarly, the lack of interaction often elicited feelings of isolation, and of not being supported, also hindered identity development. With the limited interactions associated with a hybrid program, participants consistently cited that the face-to-face interaction opportunities were critical to their understanding and the progression of their professional identity development as a CES.

Participants enrolled in a hybrid program where a formalized cohort was in place all cited that their cohort was instrumental to their identity development. A few participants in hybrid programs that did not have a formal cohort, formed an informal one. These cohort groups, both formal and informal, were made of life-long and less significant but influential relationships, and became a source of ongoing support professionally and personally. In some instances these cohort relationships served as a platform for participants to compare themselves with their peers and gage their competency and progress toward their professional identity development. Some participants also expressed that being able to observe faculty and to determine whether they wanted to emulate their observations or discard them because they did not fit into their sense of their own professional identity, was important to their professional identity development too.

Within the context of a hybrid CES doctoral program, participants engaged in conceptual and experiential learning, connected with others to form supportive relationships, were able to make comparisons and received feedback. Through this process participants expressed that their confidence grew and their professional identity evolved toward becoming a CES. Participants experienced their growing confidence differently, based on the status of their identity and the degree of CES experience they had prior to starting their hybrid doctoral program. Growing confidence was less affected when participants already had some mastery of the tasks associated with being a CES or had significant professional and life experience, therefore they experienced less self-doubt, anxiety and feeling like an “imposter”, than those participants who entered their hybrid program with little to no CES experience. As participants described their professional identity developing, they described it in terms of the particular tasks/roles being mastered; teaching, supervising, leadership and scholarship. As the roles became mastered and synthesized, participants described their identity evolving as a whole, as a Counselor Educator and Supervisor.

### **OVERVIEW OF CATEGORIES, PROPERTIES, & DIMENSIONS**

#### **Category: Beginning of Hybrid Doctoral CES Program (Context)**

The context for the professional identity development experience is within a CES hybrid doctoral program. A hybrid doctoral program is an inherently different experience than a traditional face-to-face doctoral program. In a face-to-face program many of the learning experiences occur within the structure of the program and interaction with faculty and students occurs regularly. In a hybrid program most of the learning experiences occur outside of the program, and requires initiative and motivation on part of the students to locate these learning opportunities. Additionally, face-to-face interaction with faculty and other students is limited. Given this, several participants questioned the program at first, and wondered if others would see their experience as less than.

Recognizing who the participants were upon starting their respective hybrid program was also part of the context. Participants entered their hybrid program with varying degrees of experience. All participants had counseling experience and all held licenses in their respective states, but there were differences with experience in teaching, supervising, leadership and scholarship. Participant’s professional identity was also at varying stages of development; no identity, singular identity, beginning of CES identity. Another important aspect to who participants were as they started their hybrid program was related to the degree of resiliency they brought with them.

#### **Property: Comparing Hybrid Program to Perceptions of F2F Program**

*Dimension: Appreciating convenience – feeling a sense of loss or lacking.* Participants expressed appreciating the convenience of being in a program that is online, where they can complete the course work at their convenience, day or night, and that they do not have to up root themselves and their family to pursue a doctoral degree. It was mentioned by a few participants that in a face-to-face doctoral program there would be opportunities to teach and supervise, conduct research and connect in general with faculty and peers. There was a sense of having lost those opportunities by electing to be in a hybrid program.

#### **Property: Describing Self Going into Hybrid Program**

*Dimension: Having little experience – Having significant experience.* Experience in this instance references the tasks/roles that are typically associated with being a CES. These tasks/roles are teaching at a college/university, supervising, leadership, or scholarship. Participants entered their hybrid program having varied experience related to these CES tasks.

While all participants had clinical experience, only a few had a significant amount of experience teaching at a college or university level and with clinical supervision.

*Dimension: Having no identity – having the beginnings of a CES identity.* Participants began their hybrid program with varying degrees of professional identity formed. The range of development ran from having no professional identity, to having a singular identity such as a clinician, a school counselor or an addictions counselor, to already having a CES identity beginning to form. Participants also described specific theoretical orientations that they held such as humanistic, CBT, and solution focused.

*Dimension: Being passively resilient – Being actively resilient.* Participants expressed a range of resiliency when navigating through their hybrid program. Through each of the data collection stages participants described being able to have fun with the process, being laid back, being able to go with the flow, which would be more passively resilient to being more actively resilient by being tenacious, stubborn, having perseverance, and determination. These characteristics prior to entering the program, were important especially in a hybrid environment with little structured support, and where participants needed to be self-directed.

### **Category: Learning How to Be a CES**

Learning to be a CES involves learning new information from course content, engaging in experiential learning activities associated with being a CES. Tasks associated with being a CES are teaching, supervising, leadership and scholarship.

#### **Property: Engaging in Conceptual Learning (Coursework)**

*Dimension: Doing assignments – making meaning of assignments.* Conceptual learning includes reading and writing assignments that would be typically required as part of the coursework. Conceptual learning about the history of the counseling profession, gave several participants an understanding of how far the profession has come and a sense pride. A few participants cited that there were assignments that helped them make greater meaning of the counseling profession and of what it means to be a CES. A few participants also stated that starting the program made them feel as if their CES was already forming.

#### **Property: Engaging in Experiential Learning (CES Tasks)**

*Dimension: Engaging in a new task – engaging in a task where some mastery is present.* CES tasks are defined as teaching, supervising, conducting research and taking on leadership roles. Participants indicated that by doing these tasks they were able to apply conceptual knowledge and try out skills they observed others doing such as peers and faculty, and it also gave them a sense of being a CES. Participants experienced more anxiety and self-doubt with tasks that were new to them, while those tasks that had been performed before, participants felt more confidence.

### **Central Category: Connecting with Others**

Connecting with others is defined as having some sort of face-to-face interaction with others. Within the context of a hybrid program connecting with others was a critical experience for participants because connections were not easily made or maintained, due to the limited face-to-face contact with others. Some participants also cited that connecting with others was a way of putting their experiences into context and stating that it made their experiences more “real”. It was also expressed that the absence of interacting, not being able to connect, and/or having negative interactions was considered a hindrance to identity development. This category encompassed forming long term relationships, interacting in an informal way such as with networking, observing and assessing others and receiving feedback.

**Property: Having a Range of Relationships**

*Dimension: Forming life-long relationships – having less significant, but influential interactions.* The range of relationships included significant and life-long relationships that participants could count on for support, encouragement, and feedback. These relationships were typically described as mentor type roles, or relationships with peers or several peers in a cohort. Other relationship that might not be life long, but still influential provided opportunities for participants to have someone to ask questions of, commiserate, and normalize their experience. Often time these relationships were formed after only meeting in person once or twice. There are also interactions that may not lead to a relationship, but occur mostly in large group scenarios such as attending conferences, and residencies. These interactions allowed participants to connect to a professional community.

**Property: Experiencing Different Types of Interactions**

*Dimension: Having positive and supportive interactions – having non-supportive negative or limited interactions.* Experiencing positive interactions with others led to feelings of being validated, encouraged, and provided a sense of belonging. A few participants expressed feeling that more collegial relationships with faculty were appreciated and that those relationships lead to growing confidence and progression in their identity development. It was also noted that professional identity development was hindered when participants did not have opportunity to interact, or had limited or negative interactions. Limited interactions were associated with being in a hybrid program and negative interaction consisted difficult or challenging interactions with faculty and peers.

**Property: Comparing Self to Others**

*Dimension: Internalizing observations – discarding observations.* Participants expressed comparing their perceived level of skills and abilities to that of faculty and other professionals as they (faculty and professionals) engaged in CES tasks. During this comparison participants determined whether they would emulate what they had observed or if they would discard it because it did not fit within their evolving CES professional identity.

*Dimension: Feeling behind others – exceeding others.* Some participants stated feeling that they felt “behind” compared to their peers because it seemed like their peers had so much more experience. Participants expressed feeling relieved because they felt they were equal to their peers, and there were instances when comparing themselves to their peers, participant’s felt as though they were ahead of them in many ways. These comparisons were a way of measuring progress and ultimately, with time, aided in growing confidence and movement with their identity development. This seemed more relevant to the participants who were in a program that had a formal cohort model.

**Property: Receiving Feedback**

*Dimension: Receiving Positive Feedback – Receiving Constructive or No Feedback.* Feedback is defined in the broadest of possible ways. Feedback can be formal or informal, evaluative or non-evaluative, from a faculty or other CES. It can be from peers during interactions and even in the most informal way when going to a conference or a residency and feeling welcomed into the environment. It can also be indirect as when getting asked to teach a class and then return again, or being asked to take on more responsibility. Positive feedback validated participant’s growth and skills, and encouraged further pursuit of experiences that would be considered CES tasks. Constructive feedback lead to feeling humbled, and being self-reflective. It was also stated that with the limited face-to-face interaction receiving feedback was even more critical to developing a CES professional identity in a hybrid program.

**Category: Evolving Sense of Professional Identity (Internal Experience)**

From the beginning and throughout the program participants expressed varying degrees of development with their professional identity as a CES. Factors that contributed to the participants evolving sense of professional identity as a CES were how they perceived their identity and the amount of CES experience they had prior to starting the program. Other factors included the experiential learning they engaged in, and the connections they made with others, and subsequent feedback received.

**Property: Growing Confidence**

*Dimension: Feeling like an “imposter” - feeling like “I can do this”.* The range of feelings that participants expressed as their identity, or aspects of their identity changed, included feeling like an imposter, feelings of self-doubt, anxiety, frustration, nervousness, confusion, hopefulness, confidence, and a feeling of “I can do this”. Emotions varied from participant to participant depending on if the CES tasks were new to the participant, or if they had already established a level confidence with those tasks prior to entering the program. As participants gained more experience, interacted with others, received feedback, anxiety and self-doubt became less and confidence grew.

**Property: Changing Identity**

*Dimension: Experiencing small (aspect) changes – experiencing significant (total) changes.* Most of the participants described a moment or a series of experiences when they could sense their identity changing. Words used to describe this change in identity were hatching, turning, evolving and as a transition. These moments or experiences often occurred within the context of connecting with others, and in conjunction with engaging in a CES tasks. Often feedback from others, either formal or informal assisted with increasing confidence and fostering identity development as a CES. When participants focused on small changes, such as with teaching, supervision, leadership and scholarship, it was usually because these were aspects of being a CES that they had no mastery of prior to entering their hybrid program. As mastery was gained, identity was synthesized.



Figure 5. Final Conceptual Diagram Sent to Participants as Part of Member Check.

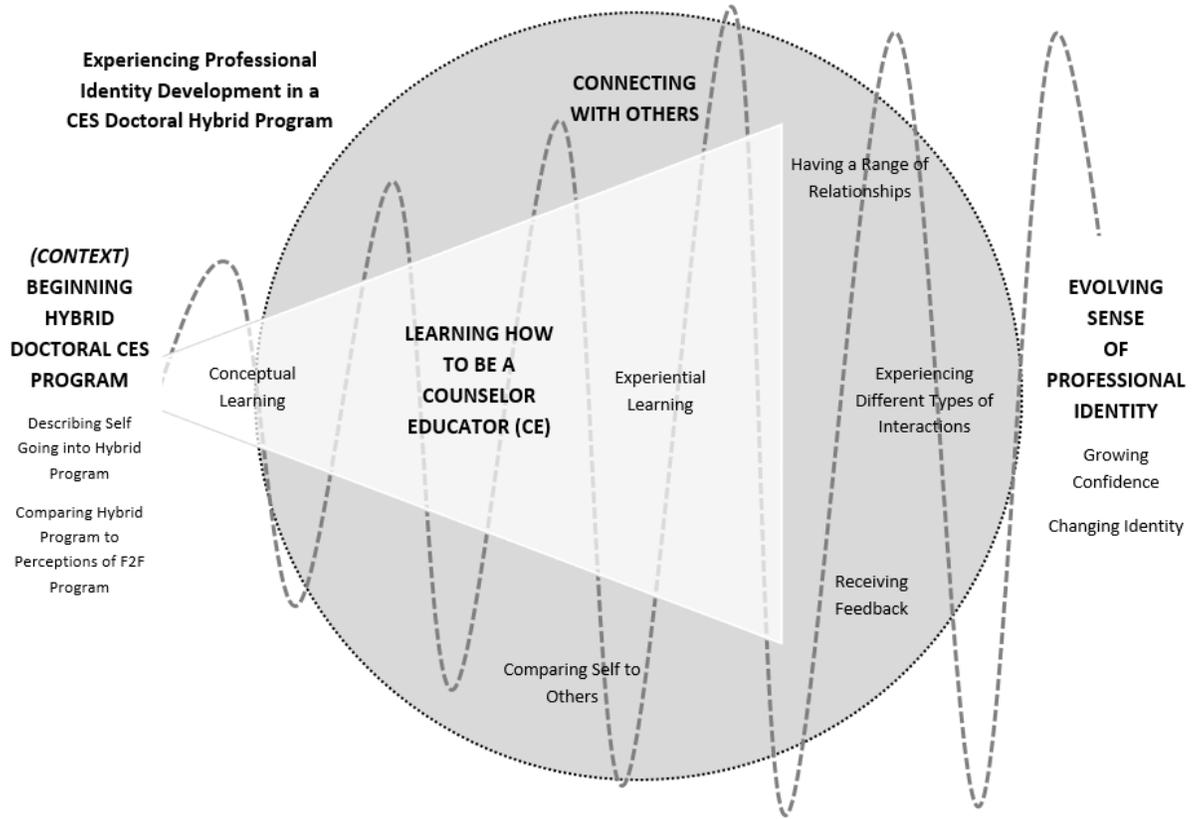


Figure 6. Final Process Diagram Sent to Participants as Part of Member Check.

## Appendix N

### Round Two Interview Questions

1. Several participants expressed having an experience when they thought “I can do this” in reference to becoming a CES. Is this an experience you had?
  - How did this experience develop and what did it mean for your PID?
  
2. Connecting with others (faculty, fellow students, other professionals) emerged as a significant experience across participants, can you share how connecting with others affected your professional identity development?
  - Walk me through the process of how connecting with others affected with your identity development by giving a specific example of an interaction or relationship you had.
  
3. Was feedback\*, either receiving it or giving it, a contributing factor in understanding or developing your professional identity in your hybrid program? How did this feedback impact your identity development? Can you provide a specific example?
 

*\*Feedback means any type of input either within the program or outside of the program, formal or informal, it could also be verbal or nonverbal.*
  
4. What, if any, personal characteristics did you use to help navigate your hybrid program. How did these/these characteristic(s) impact your identity development?
  
5. How did the outside experiences\* you had while in your hybrid program contribute to your overall professional identity development? How did you go about getting these opportunities? What was it like to have to seek these experiences? Can you give a specific example of seeking an outside experience and the impact it had on your professional identity development?

*\*Outside experiences are defined as experiences outside of the actual classroom/course content; can include experiences related to program requirements such as internship or new experiences in the workplace or new professional opportunities, or any additional experiences sought by the participant to further their learning and development.*

## Appendix O

### Round Three Interview Questions

5. Please reflect on your professional identity entering your Hybrid Program, how do you think your previous identity has impacted your professional identity development as a CE? How does your previous identity fit in with your evolving or newly formed PI as a CE?

Probing question to be asked if necessary:

- Did your previous experience prior to entering the hybrid program with either teaching, supervising, leadership or research, or lack of experience, impact your professional identity development?

6. While in your hybrid doctoral program, what contributed to your growing confidence? How did your growing confidence impact your professional identity development?

Questions posed if examples are needed:

- Was it receiving feedback, if yes, who was this feedback from and why was it important?
- Was it from connecting with others, if so what was so important about connecting with others?
- Was it engaging in CE tasks, such as teaching, supervising, leadership or research, if yes, explain why was it so important?

7. Tell me if being resilient contributed to your identity development in your hybrid program. If it did, please explain in what way was it a contributor? If no, what is a better descriptor for your experience?

Probing question to be asked if needed:

- Where do you think this resiliency, or other descriptor came from?

8. How do you think being in a hybrid program impacted your overall development as a CE