

Teaching Cultural Competence and Social Justice in a Mental Health Counseling Graduate Course: Reflection and Review of the Literature

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Abstract

Cultural competence and commitment to social justice are foundational to counselors' professional identity. There is significant attention in scholarly literature and ethical codes on what this means for the education, training, and practice. This has led counseling and counselor education programs to actively incorporate issues of cultural diversity and social justice into coursework and fieldwork requirements. Research trends indicate graduate students in counseling and counselor education benefit personally and professionally from the knowledge, skills, and awareness they develop in and outside of the classroom. Coursework on multiculturalism and social justice is a standard part of these programs, but knowledge on best practices for students' personal and professional growth is still accumulating to reflect dynamic social and political changes within the United States and abroad. This manuscript describes a required counseling course for mental health counseling students implemented in the spring of 2020. This course integrated topics related to cultural diversity and social justice and introduced conceptual frameworks for counseling and advocacy. The description of this course includes sample readings, in-class activities, and graded assignments that fulfill the learning objectives. Comparisons to research trends and existing recommendations are made, and future directions for course design are highlighted.

Keywords: counselor education; multiculturalism; social justice; teaching pedagogy

The integration of multicultural competence and social justice advocacy forms the bedrock of ethical practice for mental health counselors in the 21st century and an aspirational goal to effectively combat societal forms of injustice (Pieterse, Evans, Risner-Butner, Collins, and Mason, 2009; Ratts & Greenleaf, 2018). For many scholars, there is growing sentiment that cultural competence, commitment to social justice, and advocacy are core organizing features of how mental health is realized and distress is alleviated (Sue & Sue, 2016). While multiculturalism has long been established as the fourth force in counseling (Pederson, 2001), the role of social justice and advocacy in counseling practice is evolving. Ratts (2009) called social justice the fifth force in counseling. Sue and Sue (2016) also warned that a focus on cultural competence is ultimately ineffective if counselors do not also attend to the role of power and oppression in their clients' lives. This suggests multiculturalism and social justice are distinct but related frameworks for direct-service work and systems-level interventions. Therefore, the professional practice of counselors must embody both forces to be ethical and effective (Ratts & Greenleaf, 2018)

The American Counseling Association (ACA) advocacy competencies provide guidance for how counseling practice can move beyond the 50-minute hour and individual interventions (Lewis, Arnold, House, & Toporek, 2002). This framework is consistent with calls within counseling and counselor education for multicultural competence and social justice to be more prominently featured in how counselors see their roles in helping clients and communities (e.g., Ratts & Greenleaf, 2018). Lewis and colleagues' (2002) developed a framework that ranged from individual counseling sessions to community engagement, including outreach and policy initiatives. Ideally counselors work across these domains to address oppressive values, beliefs, and practices through education, empowerment, and advocacy (Ratts, 2009). The ACA (2014) ethical codes and growing trends in counseling and counselor education since the early 2000s have made it clear that advocacy is an ethical obligation for all counselors rather than the work of a select few who are committed to social justice (Ratts & Greenleaf, 2018).

The ACA (2014) ethical codes and advocacy competencies outlined by Lewis et al. (2002) also have implications for graduate student training. By introducing students to these competencies while also learning traditional counseling skills, they are better prepared to work with marginalized clients and to advocate in interpersonal, social, and public settings. This emergent focus on social justice supplements existing emphases in the ethical codes on helping students to be culturally competent when working with diverse client groups. The 2014 ACA ethical codes emphasize awareness, knowledge, and skills among trainees, which are necessary to develop cultural competence. This three-part model is consistent with recommendations in the multicultural literature for engaging students in dialogue about counseling work within a culturally competent framework (e.g., Sue & Sue 2016).

Research on Multiculturalism and Social Justice Competencies

Research has often focused on the infusion of advocacy and attention to cultural competence into applied components of the mental health counseling curriculum, such as the practicum and internship requirements. A qualitative study by Field and colleagues (2019) interviewed mental health counseling students at three points in their clinical training starting with the practicum course and ending after the completion of the internship. The authors found field experiences were instrumental in enhancing awareness of social injustices and developing advocacy skills to respond in ways that effect micro or macro-level change. Similarly, a qualitative study by Sanabria and DeLorenzi (2019) interviewed alumni about their experiences completing an advocacy practicum experience during their first year in the mental health counseling program. The authors found that engagement in this practicum experience increased awareness about social injustices and created a sense of efficacy to engage in advocacy. Unfortunately, these benefits did not appear to extend past graduation because none of the participants reported current involvement in advocacy work despite increased awareness and commitment to social justice.

Research on practicum and internship can be helpful in identifying how counseling students use their skills and knowledge to help actual clients or communities. However, this is an incomplete representation of how counseling programs can infuse multiculturalism and social justice into the training requirements (Goodman et al., 2004; Motulsky, Gere, Saleem, & Trantham, 2014). Research on classroom experiences and course design is necessary to study how pedagogical choices best reflect current scholarship and ethical guidelines on the teaching of these topics. This can help to pinpoint reasons for lagging skills at fieldwork placements and introduce cohort-wide pedagogical strategies to best prepare students for their roles as counselor-advocates.

Teaching about Multiculturalism and Social Justice

Classroom instruction can introduce counseling students to multiculturalism and social justice and assist in the development of the counseling skills needed to effectively work with diverse client populations. Pieterse and colleagues (2009) analyzed 54 syllabi for required diversity-related courses in counseling and counselor education programs. The authors found that most courses emphasized attitudes, knowledge, and skills, which is consistent with the tripartite model highlighted in the multicultural literature and the ACA ethical codes (ACA, 2014; Sue & Sue, 2016). These courses also utilized a “population-specific” approach by examining the values, beliefs, and histories of select minority groups, such as Blacks and African Americans. Instructors included social justice in most syllabi, although its description and relationship to multiculturalism was not consistently defined across courses. Sample topics included racism, sexism, and homophobia, but there did not appear to be any unifying theoretical frameworks across syllabi to create a lens for understanding the impact of these forms of oppression on wellbeing.

Seward (2014) studied the experiences of students of color in multicultural and diversity-related courses in counseling masters’ programs. When interviewed, the participants verbalized frustration with courses that are primarily centered on the experiences of racial minority groups as objects of study, which potentially dehumanizes them. The participants also raised concerns about stereotypical views of racial and ethnic minority groups in course readings. The students appreciated classroom dialogue and learning about peers’ cultural background as opportunities to go beyond surface level understanding of diversity. Based on these findings, Seward (2014), recommended readings written from the perspectives of racial and ethnic minority scholars and class engagement strategies that allowed students to reflect, question, and learn from each other.

Torino (2019) raised questions on how to best engage White counseling students about issues of diversity and justice. When White students are confronted with examples of societal injustice or asked to view themselves as racial beings, they can become defensive and intellectually disengage from the course. Even among White students who want to become culturally competent, the process of learning about cultural differences and legacies of oppression can elicit feelings of shame and guilt (Sue & Sue, 2016). These concerns are consistent with Seward’s (2014) findings on how students of color perceived White peers whose defensiveness and disengagement undermined class discussions and the potential for anyone to learn effectively. It also presents a challenge for faculty who teach students who vary in their willingness to engage with issues of cultural diversity and social justice. A well-articulated and deliberate pedagogical approach that fosters knowledge of cultural diversity and reflection on issues of power and privilege can support students during class discussions and nurture the growth needed to be a counselor and advocate (Bemak, Chung, Talleyrand, Jones, & Daquin, 2011).

My Positionality as the Course Instructor

The current Multicultural and Social Justice Counseling Competencies (MSJCC) developed by Ratts et al. (2015) and endorsed by the ACA emphasize intersectionality as a lens to understand the self and others. Additionally, Ratts and colleagues recommended any exploration of intersecting identities should be accompanied by reflection on power, privilege, and oppression. Consistent with the multicultural and social

justice counseling guidelines, I offer a brief description of my intersecting identities and experiences with power.

I identify as an able-bodied, cisgender White woman and a lesbian who is currently economically privileged in a role as a university professor. I grew up in a working-class family in rural Pennsylvania. Growing up in a part of Pennsylvania that was not racially diverse made class-related differences the most relevant in everyday interactions, often in ways that made my own disadvantage apparent. It was not until I entered college that racial inequality and interpersonal forms of racism drew my attention, and it was then that I first became aware of unearned privileges as a White person. As a university professor now, I reap benefits of social, cultural, and economic capital and have power that I aim to use constructively in my interactions with students and in course design choices.

The Current Class Description

In the spring of 2020, I taught a course called “counseling diverse populations,” which satisfied the mental health counseling students’ requirement by the state licensing board to complete coursework in multiculturalism (Massachusetts Board of Allied Mental Health and Human Services Professions, n.d.). This required course also is consistent with the ACA (2014) ethical guidelines for the training of graduate students in counseling and counselor education programs and the Multicultural Social Justice Counseling Competencies endorsed by the ACA (Ratts et al., 2015).

When designing the counseling diverse populations course to fulfill the multiculturalism requirement of a mental health counseling program, I was struck by Sue and Sue (2016) argument that conversations about diversity often fail to recognize power, oppression, and privilege in the relationships in society. I was also influenced by my own graduate training in the master’s mental health program discussed by Goodman et al. (2004) where students developed advocacy skills in a community-based placement during their first year in the masters’ program. Goodman and colleagues (2004) documented their first-year advocacy lab as an optional training experience that is nested within a program-wide commitment to social justice. This model has been well-received in the counseling and counselor education literature and has influenced training models in other programs (Motulsky et al., 2014). While I could not implement an advocacy-based practicum experience, I could build upon my personal experiences and knowledge of relevant literature when designing my own course.

My counseling diverse populations course included a blend of standard topics, such as multicultural competence, and utilized readings from well-regarded scholars, such as Sue and Sue (2016). Initial topics in the course introduced students to multiculturalism as the fourth force in counseling and established the importance of cultural competence to work with diverse groups (Hays, 2009; Pederson, 2001). The first half of the course aligned closely with chapters in the graduate-level textbook authored by Sue and Sue (2016) and included supplemental readings by Hays (2009) and Tummala-Narra (2016). These readings were consistent with Pieterse and colleagues’ (2009) analysis of syllabi in diversity-focused courses for mental health counseling students.

The halfway point of the course introduced social justice in the assigned textbook and elsewhere in the counseling and counselor education literature (e.g., Franklin, 2009; Neville, 2015). This provided multiple perspectives on social justice and its status as an ethical imperative based on the ethical guidelines, theories of cultural competence, and personal reflections (e.g., Neville, 2015; Ratts, 2009). An article by Ratts (2009) was especially helpful in introducing social justice as a fifth force in counseling, which complemented an earlier reading by Pederson (2001) on multiculturalism as the fourth force in counseling. It also connected the course readings to topics within our counseling theories course where students studied psychoanalysis, cognitive-behavioral therapy, and person-centered therapy, which are often connected to the original three forces of counseling (Pederson, 2001). Additionally, Ratts (2009) reviewed advocacy guidelines created by Lewis and

colleagues (2002) and reprinted their original diagram. This provided a visual representation for students that we referenced throughout the remainder of the course.

The second half of the course diverged from the content of the Sue and Sue (2016) textbook but remained aligned with their vision to recognize social justice alongside any dialogue on cultural diversity. Rather than follow an often-used design to study the cultural characteristic of a different group each week (e.g., African American and Black populations), I decided to introduce theoretical frameworks that could be integrated into counseling work across presenting problems and allowed for a multifaceted way to view client identity. This decision was consistent with recommendations by Chan, Cor, and Band (2014) who warned that a focus on a single group per at a time has the potential to essentialize clients' experience and provide a single lens to understand experience. Given the typical racial and ethnic makeup of most graduate programs that is predominantly White, this lens is most often derived from the values and beliefs of a dominant cultural worldview. Even though this is a well-received approach to teaching about multiculturalism, it can be a flawed pedagogical approach if the review of cultural characteristics of various groups does not place them in a societal context marked by systemic injustice and differential access to opportunity (Pietrese et al., 2009). Rather than focus on the specific cultural characteristics of different racial and ethnic groups, I chose to introduce conceptual frameworks that could provide avenues for theoretical integration with conventional counseling theories and new strategies to foster client wellbeing. While this approach does not provide content knowledge of the values, experiences, or cultural norms of specific groups, it does introduce students to frameworks to combat injustice and a mindset to explore the cultural backgrounds of specific clients. Additionally, Sue and Sue (2016) included chapters on various minority groups, and students had access to this material by virtue of the textbook being a required reading for the course.

These frameworks were influenced by prominent scholars in multicultural counseling and psychology and other areas of the social sciences and have been utilized in counseling and counselor education literature (e.g., Goodman et al., 2004; Ratts & Greenleaf, 2018). This included: social constructionism, post-structuralism, emancipatory pedagogy, liberation psychology, and critical psychology. Feminist perspectives were not included in the syllabus for two reasons. First students had already covered feminist perspectives in their counseling theories. Secondly, given the limited number of weeks that could be dedicated to social justice-oriented frameworks, I chose to reconsider psychoanalysis and cognitive-behavioral therapy through a social justice lens by introducing the work of Hays (2009) and Tummala-Narra (2016), respectively. Certainly, feminist perspectives on multiculturalism have been influential in counseling and counselor education, and the absence of this topic in the syllabus is not meant to critique the influence of these scholars or the merits of their ideas (e.g., Goodman et al., 2004).

Graded Assignments and Class Activities

When designing the graded assignments and the class activities, I wanted to create authentic assessments that reflected the learning objectives for the course and the competencies students would need to demonstrate professionally. Case conceptualizations played prominently into the in-class activities and graded assignments. This assisted the students in applying the new theoretical frameworks to clinical work and making comparisons to conventional theories, such as cognitive behavioral therapy and psychoanalytic perspectives. The latter objective was supported by specific assigned readings in the first half of the semester, which included Hays (2009) and Tummala-Narra (2016). These assigned readings reviewed traditional approaches to counseling and showcased avenues for integration of conventional mechanisms for client change with best practices from the multicultural psychology, counseling, and counselor education (e.g., Ratts & Greenleaf, 2018; Sue & Sue, 2016). Hays (2009), for example, included a case study in the article and demonstrated how to utilize conventional CBT techniques within a multicultural orientation. Tummala-Narra (2016) infused literature on multiculturalism

and social justice into her psychoanalytic framework and routinely incorporated her experiences as a clinician, trainee, and client.

Students also read an article by Hare-Musten (1994) on discourses in the mirrored room and reflected on the merits of the author's premise in their own clinical work. Hare-Musten (1994) described the mirrored room as the way therapy sessions reflect dominant discourses in society about gender. In discussions about the article and in the reflection paper, I encouraged students to expand upon this description of the mirrored room to explore discourses related to race, social class, sexual orientation, and other marginalized identities. Although not planned at the outset of the semester, this reading coincided with the emergence of COVID-19 in the United States and the transition to remote learning for the remainder of the spring 2020 semester. It also coincided with nationwide protests over incidents police brutality against Black and African American citizens. These events, which affected many students personally and professionally, were prominent in the reflection papers and in discussions. I had incorporated other local and national events in the beginning of the semester as part of my pedagogy, but these events put issues of social justice at the forefront of many of their clinical encounters and experiences of working within communities.

Throughout the semester, I encouraged discussion about the experience of doing clinical work, often for the first time, and self-reflection related to issues of cultural diversity and social justice. This is consistent with recommendations in the multicultural literature that students should personally engage with the material and wrestle with the myriad emotions it may elicit (Seward, 2014; Torino, 2015). I was also influenced by Neville's (2015) reflections upon her teaching and mentorship style and her commitment to explicitly articulate her social justice position for students. I appreciated Neville's transparency in her stance and how that openness extended to all aspects of her courses. Using this as a guide, I shared with students my goals for the course and how my training, clinical work, research, and identity influenced the questions I asked and the lens for viewing the world. I worked diligently to avoid a message that students had to conform to my worldview, and I actively encouraged students to wrestle with difficult questions about their clinical work and the society in where we live. Liberation psychology emerged as a powerful way for students to view the relationship between the disenfranchised individual and society (Jiménez-Domínguez, 2009), and students often connected these writings to clients' experiences related with racism. It is likely this impact was felt so deeply by some students because of the timing of these discussions in the spring 2020 as BLM protests formed across the country.

Students gravitated towards readings on post-structuralism, narrative therapy, and critical psychology because these frameworks often critique the medical model of diagnosis and offer alternative ways to conceptualize mental health. For example, a book chapter by Drewery, Winslade, and Monk (2000) included the case of Ross, a client of one of the authors. Using concepts from a narrative approach, the authors described the ways Ross's life represented more than the consequences of his PTSD diagnosis or the authoritative declarations of his diagnosing clinician. Similarly, a book chapter by a Marecek and Hare-Musten (2009) critiqued the *DSM* as being largely divorced from cultural norms and the sociopolitical context. This is not an entirely new argument for the students. They had learned in previous courses how to apply the biopsychosocial framework to their clinical work to expand upon *DSM-5* symptomology when conceptualizing cases. Marecek and Hare-Musten (2009) discussed diagnosis as a potential power-imbalance in the therapeutic relationship and a way to demonstrate the expert status of the clinician. Their discussion the case of Dora, a 14-year-old girl who experienced the sexual advances of an older man and family friend. Freud diagnosed Dora as having hysteria stemming from her sexual desires for this older man and dismissed her statements the advances were disturbing and unwanted. This framed in-class discussions about the assumptions that can underlie diagnosis and ways those diagnoses may reflect societal and cultural biases towards minority groups. Students shared their own experiences diagnosing clients at internship sites and ways diagnostic considerations enhanced or hindered therapeutic work.

Across course topics, many of the assigned readings included personal reflections by the authors or case studies for the reader to consider. This was a deliberate decision on my part to encourage self-reflection by the students and to help them to map concepts onto their own clinical work. These features of the assigned readings also fostered in-class discussions on the experience of engaging in clinical work and the effects on students' emergent professional identities. This approach is consistent with recommendations to supplement didactic course components with opportunities to apply knowledge to clinical work and to process emotional reactions to the assigned readings (c.f., Brinkman & Hirsch, 2019; Sue & Sue, 2016). Some students also discussed in class and in their written assignments their experiences with prejudice, and discrimination personally and professionally and were generally supported by their peers in sharing moments of vulnerability, confusion, and anger. Discussions of privilege as a counselor or in everyday life were less common and may have represented the developmental status of students who were reflecting upon their unearned privileges while also coming to terms with the ways they experienced oppression in their lives. This is consistent with findings by Brinkman and Donohue (2020) where students in a masters-level counseling course were better at analyzing clients' intersecting identities than considering their own.

Limitations of the Current Course Design

Despite the potential strengths of this multiculturalism course, there are noteworthy limitations. First, the potential benefits for the students enrolled in the class were not evaluated in any systematic way as part of a larger research study. The extent to which this course design successfully prepared students to work with diverse populations or to identify social justice issues is unknown. Furthermore, it is unknown the extent to which students engaged in meaningful self-reflection on the sources of privilege and oppression in their own lives or how these moments of self-reflection may have ultimately impacted the quality of work with disadvantaged and marginalized clients. Reynolds (2011) recommended that courses be evaluated based on the effectiveness of their pedagogical tools to refine course delivery and maximize its impact. Additionally, the possible benefits relative to the content of similar courses in other mental health counseling programs cannot be ascertained. Research should be conducted with students enrolled in the course to determine if readings, activities, and discussions are effective at developing cultural competence, and awareness of societal injustices. The multicultural counseling literature provides numerous choices for assessment tools that are appropriate for trainee populations (Brinkman & Hirsch, 2019).

Conceptually the theoretical perspectives included in the course are not exhaustive of all relevant perspectives to inform social justice work. The frameworks chosen were done through careful review of literature on multiculturalism, social justice, and advocacy and recommendations on the training of mental health counseling students (Pieterse et al., 2009; Ratts, 2009; Sue & Sue, 2016). However, this framework is not without blind spots based upon my own understanding of social justice and reflections upon my identity as a White woman or my current economic privilege as a university professor. For example, indigenous perspectives on health and wellbeing were not assigned readings in the syllabus, which represents a lacking perspective on wellness, colonization, and oppression. Additionally, care was taken to include the voices and perspectives of racial and ethnic minority scholars (e.g., Franklin, 2009; Neville, 2015; Tummala-Narra, 2016), but further review of the syllabus is likely to find avenues for inclusion. Seward (2014) recommended syllabi for counseling graduate programs not only reflect current thinking on diversity and justice but also reflect minority perspectives in scholarship and lived experience. Future iterations of the course could benefit from more explicit inclusion of diverse viewpoints as an effort to support racial minority students' growth and to further challenge White students to reflect upon issues of privilege and oppression.

Future Directions in Course Design

Future iterations of this course could be strengthened by incorporating an advocacy or community outreach component into its design. As previously mentioned, the students enrolled in the course are typically completing their internship and were actively engaged in clinical work. This creates a potential to incorporate social justice work into actual experiences with clients, agencies, and communities. This is consistent with recommendations by Sanabria and DeLorenzi (2019) for experiential learning and the process of exposure, recognition, and action discussed by Field et al. (2019). The findings reported by Field and colleagues (2019) also highlight the need for sufficient knowledge to act as an advocate and places to process the emotional responses to increased awareness. This suggests that a year-long course dedicated to cultural competence and advocacy may be best suited to supporting students during their internship. This course, if offered, should not take the place of group supervision, but should combine didactic aspects on social justice with opportunities for self-reflection and planning of advocacy efforts. Edwards, Tate, Cook, Toigo, and Yeomans (2017) provided further guidance in designing an extended course design focused on advocacy at an internship site based on the findings of their qualitative study. Counseling students in a multicultural counseling course completed an advocacy project over the course of ten weeks and reflected on their efforts. The project yielded many benefits for students who reflected on the meaning of advocacy and developed relevant skills. However, Tate and colleagues indicated that logistical issues, such as time restrictions, limited the impact of the project on knowledge and skill development among the students.

These limitations discussed by Tate et al. (2018) in their study could be addressed effectively through a year-long course setup that would allow more time for planning and engagement in the community. Such engagement with communities should not be designed to serve only the training needs of the students but rather reflect genuine engagement with clients and ongoing collaboration with community partners. Goodman and colleagues (2018) described two community-advocacy projects that provide opportunities for masters-level training in within the context of ongoing collaboration and advocacy work involving two counseling faculty. The Goodman et al. (2018) description, which bares similarities to previous discussions by Goodman et al. (2004), highlights the benefits of advocacy work as a supplement to traditional counseling fieldwork placements to raise consciousness and to foster students' identities as social justice advocates. Furthermore, these benefits to students stand alongside the ongoing work of faculty with community partners.

Motulsky and colleagues (2014) documented the ways cultural competence and advocacy were integrated into the entire counseling program as a fundamental organizing feature rather than the focus on a single course. This is an ideal direction for training of graduate students for several reasons. First it provides consistent and systematic exposure to theory and application across courses, and it allows for self-reflection throughout the completion of all relevant coursework. For students who have yet to reflect or explore, consistent focus across courses provides the framework to engage in this work before and during fieldwork placements. This is a key point raised by Field et al. (2019) who suggested a developmental approach to social justice competencies is needed, particularly among students whose first exposure to social justice issues comes in graduate school. Finally, it helps professors to track the growth of their students and intervene accordingly if students encounter barriers to developing sufficient awareness, knowledge, and skills for ethical practice (Brinkman & Donohue, 2020; Goodman et al., 2018).

The current course as it is sequenced in the graduate curriculum is among the last the students will take, and they have already dedicated an entire semester to clinical work before enrolling in this course. This is likely to diminish the effects of learning about social justice frameworks and the potential for self-reflection as it relates to issues of power and privilege. This course could be placed earlier in the students' course sequences where the frameworks discussed can inform their goals for an internship experience and the formation of a supportive supervisory relationship. Motulsky and colleagues (2014) discussed an ideal scenario where the

entire curriculum is design with social justice aims in mind, and it does not fall to the learning objectives of a single course to introduce students to relevant concepts, foster their critical consciousness, or support their cultural competence.

These directions for subsequent courses align with best practice recommendations in the multicultural literature and reflect exemplary work being conducted in other mental health counseling programs (Chan et al., 2014; Multulsky et al., 2014). The integration of didactic and experiential course components is well-received in the literature and considered ideal of achieving the ethical mandates of the ACA codes. Ultimately the merits of this course to inform students and foster growth should be nested within a larger framework of multicultural competence and advocacy among trainees. This best serves the students who enroll in the program and the fieldwork placements where they will engage with diverse populations.

Conclusion

The course described above reflects an integration of topics multiculturalism and social justice for mental health counselors in training. This balance of two related but distinct conceptual frameworks is consistent with calls within the counseling and counselor education literature for counselors to evolve in how they define their professional identities and interact with the public. The course design also aligns with best practices based on the ACA ethical guidelines. The content of the course introduced relevant concepts and theoretical frameworks for students to utilize as part of their counseling work at internships and offered opportunities for reflection on issues of cultural diversity and social justice. Despite limitations in the implementation of the course and avenues to refine the syllabus, the course presents a viable strategy to teach about cultural diversity and social justice for mental health counseling students. Through further refinement and elaboration of the pedagogical goals this course has the potential to enhance students' preparation for clinical work and advocacy and contribute to broader dialogues within counseling and counselor education about best practices in the teaching of multiculturalism and social justice.

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