

Faculty Shadowing Reflection Paper

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Dr. Deedre Mitchell is a wonderful and talented counselor educator who previously taught at Messiah University and is new to Liberty University. Her passion for the field is evident and it was an insightful experience to shadow her throughout the course. At a university that is CACREP accredited there are standard courses and initially during your job interview, you may be asked about a preference or the institution may need a specific course taught at that time. However, as time progresses it is usually ideal to have professors teach in classes that they exhibit the most strength and passion.

A hired professor for a standard course is usually given a course syllabus and textbooks are typically listed as part of the previous syllabus. Though with time can the professor can become the subject matter expert (SME) and can select their own choice of textbooks. When assigned to a class, how do we determine what is fair to expect as students may begin at all different levels of writing?

Dr. Mitchell described her first experiences with grading and understood exactly the question at hand. She discussed reading through the first set of assignments and starting with a certain criterion later realizing that perhaps there were certain deficits that were lacking across all students and therefore the criterion might change. As a counselor educator develops, being flexible is critical as they continuously refine their skillset. Dr. Mitchell further described a function of the learning platform that allows you to keep grades locked until you are completed, and then grades can be released simultaneously. This allows the professor to ensure that they are satisfied with the entire class grades.

As a teacher in many ways, the exchange of energy that can occur within a face-to-face setting is vibrant. The interactions and valuable spontaneous teachable moments caught just because of the setting and the literature often provide bursts of inspiration. In a virtual setting,

how do you add the humanistic quality to the course that helps to engage students? When reading through the course description, an introduction video that Dr. Mitchell uploaded brought her to life and she wasn't just another professor. We discussed this video as a way to develop the engagement between herself and the students and she also included that the discussion board was a great way to foster that interaction. With master students and 8 week strictly online courses, these are key components to help the class connect with their professor and each other.

The course shadowed was COSC 611: Counseling School Children and Adolescents in School: Social Emotional Development and Exceptionalities (D03). Through reading the discussion boards, it was inspiring to see how the students were analyzing case studies, what techniques they would use and why. Another assignment that was meaningful in description was the Honoring Diversity Presentation. It was encouraging to read discussions about multiculturalism and the importance of being aware of one's biases; as any assignment that further develops students in multicultural competence is ideal.

The components and logistics of the counselor educator's journey served as the focus for the first half of our meeting, but secondly, it was helpful to learn of Dr. Mitchell's experience and her navigations through life. To be fair, while it has been an amazing educational journey thus far, the guilt of simultaneously keeping my family intact and kids balanced has been at times overwhelming. There was much anxiety trying to discover the possibility of enjoying an engaging productive career in counseling through a variety of ways, and remain committed to family. Dr. Mitchell provided so much reassurance for in this regard. She described having boundaries in place to ensure time spent with kids and family, the importance of self-care, and not being afraid of slowing down in some areas to pay more attention to other areas is permitted.

We discussed the passion of research, other professional projects and how involving it can become, which she agreed with and truly understood.

As a counselor educator we are always modeling to our students the basic tenets of counseling. Dr. Mitchell is the embodiment of warmth, kindness and sincerity. There are many lessons learned from Dr. Mitchell, but the one that stands out the most is authenticity. Dr. Mitchell remains true to who she is, she is humble and always willing to help others learn. As she has served as an inspiration throughout this course, it is both a personal and professional goal to inspire future students.

