

Teaching Philosophy

Grace- Ann Gibby
Liberty University

Teaching is a profession that encounters individuals from all walks of life and has the wonderful opportunity to cultivate growth. The hard work involved to master techniques, content and delivery style to impact students in the most powerful way is undebatable, and yet, it is extremely rewarding to see students experience their “Aha” moments while in pursuit of academic excellence. Outside of parenting, it is perhaps, in my humble opinion, the second home to many individuals. The potential for harnessing and influencing students is truly a profession for those who feel called.

Commonly associated with a didactic methodology, teaching can utilize many delivery methods and unique materials. When lessons are engaging, they provoke curiosity; a sense of wonder. I would like my students to feel inspired through a myriad of ways. Research confirms suggests that the average attention span is 18 minutes long, this which informs how the lesson should be planned and executed. When considering methodology to counselor education, there are a variety of options: lectures, technology, didactic, seminars, and experiential. Every option can enhance the material that is presented or the experience, and it is entirely up to the counselor educator to utilize an option that does not detract from the learning journey but rather complements it.

Personally, I would utilize all of the options with the idea of creating different combinations depending on the material. My preference would be lecture style, as I feel I possess strong presenting skills. However, I enjoy allowing students to be exposed to the information, have time to process it and then actively work out applying the information. Students writing skills need to be developed and so I would encourage at least 1-2 papers per class, so that there is ample time to practice research and writing. I am also aware that students are so different, it is helpful to adopt a variety of ways to evaluate students. Writing papers, case scenarios, role-plays, watching videos, journaling and discussion boards are the primary ways that I would evaluate my students. All of these methods promote critical thinking, articulation of thoughts, actively engaging with clients, watching master clinicians, and building a rapport with other students.

There are certain areas that counseling students must demonstrate competencies in: 1. Professional orientation and ethical practice, 2. Social and cultural diversity, 3. Human growth and development, 4. Career development, 5. Counseling and helping relationship, 6. Group counseling and group work, 7. Assessment and testing, and 8. Research and program evaluation. As students’ progress through the program, they will become familiar with these core areas and with the goal of being competent. It is my desire to design hands-on activities that will encourage critical thinking; such as role-plays, analysis of case studies, and as much interaction with real situations and scenarios to further promote growth.

In Counselor Education, there is a unique intertwining due to the nature of the mental health field. Students who are pursuing a career in counseling will learn much more about themselves while they are accumulating knowledge. This has implications for the emotional regulation capabilities of students as they pursue their degree. As a Counselor Educator, I am intentionally aiming to model the fundamentals of counseling as I teach the information. Students need to experience empathy, congruency and my utilization of person-of-the therapist

Commented [KKE(fc&FS1)]: It’s so true

Commented [KKE(fc&FS2)]: Perhaps place here what “it” is... are you referring to teaching as something that educators feel at-home about? Just some clarity would help make this opening paragraph a bit stronger

Commented [KKE(fc&FS3)]: I removed future tense, because you ARE an educator ;)

Commented [KKE(fc&FS4)]: Add citation if referring to literature

Commented [KKE(fc&FS5)]: In light of this statement, I wonder how this is different from other professions?

Commented [KKE(fc&FS6)]: Ya know- I like how this is stated: “complimenting” the material...

Commented [KKE(fc&FS7)]: Change the language to a current philosophy (rather than future)

Commented [KKE(fc&FS8)]: How so?

Commented [KKE(fc&FS9)]: I think it’s safe to assume that most counselor educators would all agree that these are the competencies that students must have... so what about Grace? What specifically DO YOU bring to the table in your philosophy that might be different than others?

I love what you’re saying here about hands-on activities... what might be different about your approach/philosophy? How can we see GRACE here... your unique abilities and characteristics in your teaching identity?

as they learn the foundation of counseling. This interaction with authenticity encourages students to take risks on themselves and become vulnerable to the possibilities of growth.

Commented [KKE(fc&FS10): There we go! Yes!!

One of the great rewards and challenges within academic settings is the guarantee of change. The mental health field is ever-evolving and as professionals within this field flexibility is vital to flourishing in this career. With the ongoing global CO-VID-19 pandemic, mental telehealth has been on the increase. Helping my students to navigate changes successfully and to make a commitment to their ongoing personal and professional lives is a goal that I need to both emulate and inspire.

Teaching is both an art and a science, there is much knowledge to disseminate, and the style with which it is delivered can encourage a lasting impact. I would like for my students to be transformed when they have completed a class or some experience with me as their educator. The cost of higher education is substantial and students are making many sacrifices to attain their goals, therefore my professional commitment is to ensure that students use their time wisely, make each interaction count, each assignment count, bringing my best self to the class, being present and emotionally engaged. Students will benefit greatly from this type of commitment and hopefully allow themselves to become better clinicians.

Commented [KKE(fc&FS11): Oh I love the word "transformed."

Commented [KKE(fc&FS12): FOR SURE