

MOATE, RANDALL M., Ph.D., December 2014

Counseling and  
Human Development  
Services

NOVICE PROFESSIONAL COUNSELORS' PERCEPTIONS OF WHAT WAS MOST  
HELPFUL TO THEM ABOUT THEIR TEACHERS IN DIDACTIC CLASSES  
DURING THEIR MASTER'S PROGRAM (173 pp.)

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This research investigation was designed to explore the viewpoints of novice professional counselors to understand what it was about their teachers in didactic classes during their program that they perceived as being most helpful to the professional counselor they have become. Q methodology was selected for the research design used in this study, as it was well suited to exploring the viewpoints of novice professional counselors.

Thirty-five individuals participated in the study. They completed a 37-item instrument that assessed what they perceived as being "most unhelpful" to "most helpful" about their teachers in didactic classes during their master's program. Participants in this study were novice professional counselors who met the following criteria: a) graduates of a counselor education degree program, b) accrued at least 500 post master's direct hours of clinical service working with clients, and c) were no more than three years removed from graduating from their master's degree program.

Data analysis was completed using the PQMethod 2.11 computer software, which completed a factor analysis. Three significant factors were found with high positive

between factor correlations. A secondary analysis was then completed that revealed an overarching super-factor that existed between Factor 1, Factor 2, and Factor 3.

Two primary findings emerged from the data analysis of this study. First, three significantly different factors or shared viewpoints exist among novice professional counselors relative to the research question (i.e., *Application Oriented Learner*, *Intrinsically Motivated Learner*, *Affect Oriented Learner*). Second, although three different shared viewpoints exist among novice professional counselors (i.e., *Application Oriented Learners*, *Intrinsically Motivated Learners*, *Affect Oriented Learners*), there is also a high level of agreement among these three shared viewpoints, suggesting that master's students in clinical mental health counseling may have similar learning preferences to one another. Similarities among the three factors were substantial enough to reveal a super-factor that represents a middle ground of commonality among the three factors of what is perceived as being helpful about teachers of didactic classes in clinical mental health counseling master's degree programs.