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Counselor Trainees' Perceptions of Preparedness for Practicum Supervision

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COUNSELOR TRAINEES' PERCEPTIONS OF
PREPAREDNESS FOR PRACTICUM SUPERVISION

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
University of New Orleans
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy
in
The Counselor Education Program

by

Jannette Sturm-Mexic

B.F.A., Tulane University, 1975
M.Ed., University of New Orleans, 2002

August 2005

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to the memory of my mother, Betty Sturm Mexic, who taught me the important of reaching for the stars. I also dedicate this dissertation to the memory of Harold Morris, who helped me realize that I can touch and be touched by the stars in my galaxy.

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Whenever I needed advice or simply a supportive ear, I could always turn to Dr. Vivian McCollum. More important than her role as one of my dissertation committee

members was my knowledge that she was always there for me, encouraging me to reach my greatest potential, challenging me to look beyond the obvious.

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ABSTRACT

This exploratory research study investigated perceptions of practicum counselor trainees to help understand how prepared they believed they were for supervision. Based upon common elements of various developmental models of supervision, this study examined counselor trainees' perceptions of their preparedness for practicum supervision based upon: (a) expectations of supervision; (b) understanding of the structure and formats used in supervision; (c) receptivity to and use of feedback in supervision; and (d) the evaluative component of supervision. This study also investigated possible explanations as to what factors may lead counselor trainees to feel more or less prepared for practicum supervision.

The participants in this study were 156 counseling students enrolled in practicum courses at 27 CACREP-accredited counseling programs across the United States during the spring semester of 2005. The instrument used in this study was the Counselor Trainee Preparedness Perceptions Survey - Practicum Supervision (CTPPS-PS) survey, developed by the researcher. The CTPPS-PS was administered anonymously on-line through an Internet link distributed to students by practicum instructors or in paper format. To minimize the effects of varying practicum supervision experiences incurred by the sample participants, data collection was restricted to a 30-day period during the first half of the academic semester.

Findings from this research revealed significant positive relationships between counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceived preparation for various aspects of supervision. For the various aspects of supervision, the strongest relationships were found between overall perceptions of preparedness and preparation for what is required in supervision and to accept guidance and support through supervision. The weakest relationship was between overall perceptions and preparation for supervisory evaluation.

These research findings also revealed significant positive relationships between counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceptions of practicum supervision experience to date as well as with comfort experienced with receiving feedback in supervision. Another significant finding was consistently higher overall perceptions of preparedness for trainees being supervised by part-time faculty and for trainees attending universities with doctoral counseling programs.

The findings of this study may encourage counselor educators to augment their programs and courses with supervision preparation strategies so that students may begin practicum feeling better prepared than the participants in this study. For supervisors, findings from this study can form the basis for a dialogue at the onset of supervision to determine the needs of counselor trainees, and thus help mitigate potential obstacles to practicum experiences resulting from areas lacking in preparation for supervision.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The process of training professional counselors involves various developmental strategies grounded in academic coursework and supervised clinical experience (Bernard & Goodyear, 2004). Supervised clinical experience typically occurs towards the end of a master's level counseling student's academic preparation for working with diverse client populations and issues. According to Bernard and Goodyear, the supervisory process is an integral part of counselor development, providing guidance, support and resources to assist counselor trainees' transition to the post-master's stage of their professional counselor developmental journey.

Standards set forth by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs, CACREP, requires completion of practicum as the first counseling clinical training experience, and subsequent internship clinical experience prior to obtaining a master's degree in counseling. CACREP (Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs, n.d.) requires that this clinical experience include weekly one-on-one individual supervision with an approved supervisor at the clinical location and group academic supervision with other student counselor trainees facilitated by a faculty member or doctoral student trained as a supervisor.

Taking into account additional supervision requirements of clinical locations and university counseling programs, counselor trainees often experience double CACREP's requirement of a minimum of two and one-half hours of supervision per week. Although CACREP Standards require weekly supervision for counselor trainees, CACREP does not require nor provide guidelines for coursework to prepare students for the supervisory process that accompanies practicum and internship clinical experience. An on-line review of counselor education programs' curricula and syllabi resulted in no indication of pre-practicum course content specifically focused upon student preparation for clinical experience supervision.

Bernard and Goodyear (2004) noted that supervision is an intervention and that a supervisor should be prepared, preferably through formal training, to be an effective clinical supervisor. In an effort to prepare new counselor trainees for clinical supervision, Bernard and Goodyear cited Giordano, Atlekruse, and Kern's (2004) Supervision Agreement to be entered into at the onset of supervision, to define the purpose of supervision and clarify expectations within the supervisory relationship. Therefore, theoretically supervisors are prepared to supervise counselor trainees and to help counselor trainees understand the supervisory process as these trainees are entering supervision, but it is not known if counselor trainees believe they are prepared for the experience of clinical supervision.

This research study investigated counselor trainees' perceptions of their preparedness for practicum supervision. Specifically, this study focused on determining the perceived level of preparedness for components of supervision associated with the

expectations of supervision, the supervisory process, use of feedback in supervision, and the evaluative component of supervision.

Problem in Perspective

Bernard and Goodyear (2004) cited numerous references on various developmental supervision models and approaches to assist counselor trainees through the process of supervision. Developmental supervision models such as Stoltenberg and Delworth's Integrated Developmental Model (Stoltenberg, 1993) theorize that practicum level counselor trainees are at a developmental level where both the trainees and their supervisors view supervision as a very important part of clinical experience. Certain aspects of supervision, however, may provoke anxiety in counselor trainees, such as the performance of linking theory to practice, use of corrective feedback as a developmental learning technique, and the evaluative component of supervision (Ackerley & Engebretson, 1985; McGraw, 1986; Rønnestad & Skovholt, 1993).

Counselor trainees complete coursework to help them prepare to work with clients in various clinical settings. By also preparing students for their practicum supervisory experiences, counselor educators further prepare students for their initial clinical experience. With knowledge of counselor trainees' perceptions of their preparedness for supervision, counselor educators can better assist pre-practicum counseling students prepare for practicum by introducing students to the various aspects of supervision. Also, with a thorough understanding of these perceptions, supervisors can implement strategies to reduce trainees' anxiety and promote developmental learning within the supervisory relationship.

No evidence of research, however, was found examining the perceptions of counselor trainees about preparedness for supervision. This study intended to fill that void by investigating trainees' perceptions of supervision preparedness and identifying possible factors influencing their perceptions of preparedness.

The benefits of preparation for the unknown or unfamiliar can be found throughout society. Expectant parents are prepared through Lamaze training for the process of childbirth (AllAboutMoms.com, n.d.), and parenting classes prepare parents for what to expect during the childrearing years (DeJong, 2003). The medical profession has found that preparing patients for what to expect before, during, and after surgery results in positive patient surgical and post-surgery experiences (Doering et al., 2000; The Arthritis Society, 2003).

School children are prepared for standardized testing by using similar content and formatted practice tests during the years preceding the graded testing. High school students prepare for taking college entrance examination. Universities such as the University of New Orleans offer programs to prepare recent high school graduates for the rigors of college.

Preparation for counseling benefits clients and therapeutic results. Corey's (2004) suggestion to pre-screen clients for membership in a counseling group including what to expect as a member in the group is supported by psychotherapy role-induction studies cited by Garfield (1994). Included in Garfield's citations was a 1973 study conducted by Stupp and Bloxom using role-induction techniques that resulted in significantly higher attitude and other in-therapy measures. Garfield also used role-induction techniques in a study investigated the relationship between client and therapist expectations for

psychotherapy outcomes. Again role-induction resulted in significantly higher responses on numerous criterion measures including that of attendance at therapy sessions.

The results of McGraw's (1996) study on the effects of pre-supervision preparation concluded that counselor trainees reported less role ambiguity and role conflict as a result of watching a supervision preparation videotape. Research was found that examined counselor trainees' anxieties with various aspects of supervision (Ackerley & Engebretson, 1985; McGraw, 1986; Rønnestad & Skovholt, 1993), and included Harris' (1994) suggestion for a structured approach to supervision with pre-event strategies employed to reduce anxieties associated with supervisory feedback and evaluation.

Based upon my personal experiences and those of other doctoral level supervisors at the University of New Orleans, it appeared that master's level practicum students were unclear about many aspects of supervision. Throughout their practicum semester, these new counselor trainees experienced periods of apprehension and anxiety associated with supervisory process, and especially with feedback and evaluation. As a result, I developed a plan to employ supervision-based strategies in a master's level advanced counseling techniques course. Included in these strategies was the use of the Interpersonal Process Recall (Riggs, 1979) to foster students' reflections upon what did and did not work in role-play counseling sessions. Also, doctoral student coaches were encouraged to model supervisory behaviors in their interactions with students, and I facilitated numerous informal discussions on supervisory process, requirements, and evaluation. At the end of the semester, students expressed a higher level of understanding of many aspects of supervision than what I had experienced with practicum students I had

supervised in the past. Eight of these students began practicum the following semester and were included in the pilot test of the instrument developed for this study, thus allowing more opportunity to determine the benefits of supervision-based strategies in this advanced counseling techniques course.

Varying perceptions on preparedness for supervision was found amongst twenty-four current or recent master's level practicum students at the University of New Orleans. The perceptions of these students were obtained in conjunction with pilot tests and informal individual and group conversations during the development of the instrument used to collect data for this research study, the Counselor Trainee Preparedness Perceptions Survey – Practicum Supervision. For the eight students who received practicum preparation training in the techniques class previously mentioned, their responses to the survey question on perceptions of overall preparedness for supervision were 19% higher than the responses of the sixteen students who did not receive any pre-training. Pre-trained students verbally indicated that the practicum preparation received had definitely helped prepare them for practicum supervision and overall positively influenced their supervision experience. The relationship between perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and practicum supervision experience to date had a high correlation of .79. Also, strong positive correlations ranging from .72 to .92 were found between responses to overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceived preparation for various aspects of supervision. These findings indicated relationships might possibly exist between perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and for various aspect of supervision as well as to overall supervisory experiences.

Based upon literature reviewed, reported perceptions of the previously mentioned University of New Orleans master's level students, and personal experiences, it was this researcher's opinion that preparation for practicum supervision is an important component of counselor trainee development. As preparation may be provided through formal practicum training as well as through pedagogical techniques, an investigation into counselor trainees' perceptions of their preparedness for practicum supervision was warranted.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate counselor trainees' perceptions of their preparedness for practicum supervision. Specifically, this study examined counselor trainees' perceptions of how prepared they believe they were for individual and group supervisory experiences associated with practicum, the initial clinical experience of counseling students.

Importance of the Study

As master's level counseling students begin their practicum, they leave the more-structured environment of the classroom to begin the process of becoming counselors by working as counselor trainees in agencies, schools, and other clinical placements where they will have direct contact with clients. This process of becoming counselors involves supervised clinical experience, which is academically evaluated based upon generally subjective instrumentation and performance reviews from supervisors (Bernard & Goodyear, 2004). During practicum, counselor trainees typically receive supervision at

both their clinical placement location and university. Supervision in both of these environments may include individual supervision, group supervision, or both. Although CACREP Standards outline how counseling students are academically prepared for their clinical experience through requisite coursework, these standards do not address preparing counseling students for the supervisory process and expectations that accompany clinical experience.

The results of this study will aid counselor educators in understanding how prepared counselor trainees believe they are for practicum supervision, through an examination of their perceptions of preparation for various aspects of supervision. These findings can assist counselor educators with determining what areas of supervision should be addressed through academic supervision pre-training.

Also, findings from this research study can assist counselor educators' understanding of how pre-practicum supervision preparation can improve the process of counselor development and demonstrate the educational value gained through supervision by master's level counselor trainees in their practicum semester and beyond. The results of this study provide perceptions of preparedness based upon supervision pre-training received by counselor trainees, thereby offering insight into the possible effectiveness of various pre-practicum supervision training interventions.

This study's findings additionally offer insight into the perceived concerns of counselor trainees in order that these concerns might be addressed by instructors in pre-practicum coursework and early in the supervisory process by supervisors.

Personal Interest in Conducting This Research

My interest in the topic of master's level counselor trainee preparedness for supervision began with my own practicum experience. Having no formal preparation for supervision, my perceptions of supervision were based upon past work-related experiences, where supervisors were individuals whose primary responsibilities were to monitor my performance and discipline me for my errors. If supervisors chose to provide guidance to me, it was my sense that it was by their choice and not through their responsibility to me as a subordinate employee.

I also realized that had I been prepared for what to expect in supervision, I would have felt comfortable asking for more from my supervisory relationships and felt less threatened when inquiring about the educational intent of certain supervisory requests and actions towards my growth and development as a counselor. For instance, having a strong interest in working with parental-child relationships, I was very disappointed when my first opportunity to work with a parent and estranged-teenager was denied near the beginning of practicum because my supervisor was unaware of my skill development for working with these types of relationships. Because I was unaware that I could approach my supervisor to provide her with evidence that I was capable of counseling these clients, I begrudgingly accepted my supervisor's decision and felt denied of a valuable learning experience.

My intentions for pursuing this research study were to learn more about counselor trainees' perceptions of supervision and to identify which aspects of supervision should be addressed through pre-practicum preparation. As I believe that preparation for supervision is very important for developing counselors, I hoped that the results of this

study would provide a foundation upon which counselor educators can design and implement pre-practicum supervision interventions to better prepare counselor trainees for supervision and thus enhance counselor development. I also hoped that the results of this study would provide practicum supervisors with insight into expectations and aspects of supervision that should be addressed early in the supervisory process to help reduce anxiety and discomfort with supervision.

Conceptual Framework

Stoltenberg (1993) based his original Counselor Complexity Model of developmental supervision, later refined and renamed the Integrated Development Model, upon how trainees at different developmental levels think, reason, and understand their training environment. According to the Integrated Development Model, there are three counselor trainee developmental levels, with most beginning counselor trainees developmentally categorized in the first level. Counselor trainees in the first level of Stoltenberg's model are categorized as having: (a) high motivation and anxiety relating to being focused on acquiring skills and wanting to know the best approach with clients; (b) dependent upon structured supervision with positive feedback and little direct confrontation; and (c) highly self-focused on skills with limited self-awareness and apprehension about evaluation.

Based upon various developmental models of supervision (Loganbill, Hardy, & Delworth, 1982; Rønnestad & Skovholt, 1993; Stoltenberg, 1993), this research study examined counselor trainees' perceptions of supervision preparedness on: (a) expectations of supervision; (b) understanding of the structure and formats used in

supervision; (c) receptivity to and use of feedback in supervision; and (d) the evaluative component of supervision.

Stoltenberg (1993) noted that students should receive some form of practicum supervision preparation during their academic coursework to assist beginning counselor trainees with relatively accurate expectations for supervision. Bernard and Goodyear (2004) added that students need to be prepared for the process of supervision, and equipped with the knowledge that their supervision experiences may vary depending upon supervisory styles of each supervisor.

Skovholt and Rønnestad (1992) studied themes in therapist and counselor development including the theme of reflection and its importance in professional and personal development. Through feedback received during coursework, Sweitzer and King (2004) noted that counselor trainees might have been prepared not to be anxious or frustrated by corrective feedback offered in supervision. However, receptivity to feedback may be based upon past experiences with feedback (Page & Hulse-Killacky, 1999). Research conducted by Stockton, Morran, and Harris (1991) lends support for self-examination by counseling trainees related to concerns about giving and receiving feedback in practicum supervision.

Goodyear and Nelson (1997) noted that evaluation is a reflective process intended to gauge progress and promote future development. Unfortunately, supervisory evaluation is one of the lesser-defined and structured aspects of supervision and, as a result, provokes anxiety in counselor trainees (Bernard & Goodyear, 2004).

As this research study intended to examine counselor trainees' perceptions of preparedness for supervision, the perceptions of trainees at the developmental clinical

experience stage of practicum was determined to be appropriate for this study. The decision to limit this study to the perceptions of practicum students and not to include counselor trainees progressing through their later clinical experience of internship was based upon the view that internship-level trainees are more comfortable with the supervisory process (Skovholt & Rønnestad, 1992) and their recollections of past perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision may be influenced by actual practicum supervision experiences. Also, the perceptions of practicum supervisors on supervision preparation were not included as the intention of this study was to learn the perceptions of counselor trainees about their pre-practicum supervision preparation.

Research Question

One general research question and six research sub-questions were posed in this study.

General research question:

What are counselor trainees' perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision? Research sub-questions:

1. Is there a relationship between counselor trainees' perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceived preparation for various aspects of supervision?
2. Is there a relationship between counselor trainees' perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and prior concerns about being supervised?

3. Is there a relationship between counselor trainees' perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceptions of practicum supervision experience to date?
4. Is there a relationship between counselor trainees' perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and comfort experienced with receiving feedback in supervision?
5. To what extent do counselor trainees' perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision vary according to whether their academic program has a doctoral program of study, type of practicum site, type of supervisors, and hours per week in supervision?
6. To what extent do counselor trainees' perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision vary according to formal supervision preparation received prior to beginning practicum?

Assumptions of the Study

This research study assumed that CACREP universities would be willing to have their practicum students participate in this study and that these students would complete an internet-based survey instrument that was used to gather data. Also assumed was that the instrument developed for this study, the Counselor Trainee Preparedness Perceptions Survey - Practicum Supervision, is valid.

Furthermore, it was anticipated that there would be a strong positive correlation between pre-practicum training or discussions on aspects of supervision with perceptions of preparedness for supervision. It is also assumed that prior professional experiences,

age, and life experiences may have influenced counselor trainees' perceptions of their preparedness for supervision (Skovholt & Rønnestad, 1992).

Limitations and Delimitations

Creswell (2002) defined limitations as “potential weaknesses with the study that are identified by the researcher ... and help readers judge to what extent the findings can or cannot be generalized to other people and situations” (p. 253). A delimitation was defined by Wong (2002) as a boundary that helps provide a clear focus for research. As applied to a research study, a limitation is something that affects both the internal and external validity of the results of the study, and a delimitation is a restriction of these results.

This research study has five limitations known to the researcher. The first limitation involved unaccounted for factors that might have influenced which counselor trainees voluntarily completed the study's survey. As more universities with doctoral programs agreed to participate than did masters-only programs, a known unaccounted for factor was the self-selection of research supporting gatekeepers.

Another limitation was based upon administering the survey electronically on the Internet; as Internet access and comfort with use of computers was required in order to complete the survey, this method of instrument administration might have limited respondents and excluded data from possible respondents.

The third limitation of this research study was based upon development of an instrument for data collection. The instrument used in this research study did not have the benefit of experience beyond pilot testing to verify validity and reliability. Another

known limitation of this research study was the effects upon the validity of results by quality and consistency of practicum supervision being received by the sample participants. Counselor trainees experiencing lower quality or less consistent supervision might have different perceptions of preparedness for supervision than would trainees experiencing higher quality or more consistent supervision.

Last, this study was limited by the generalizability of the selected sample to the population from which it was selected. Counselor trainees at CACREP universities may not be representative of all counselor trainees and thus this study's results may be restricted to trainees in CACREP-accredited programs. Also, in an attempt to have equal numbers of participants from programs with and without a doctoral program of study, a disproportionate number of master's level trainees from programs having doctoral programs of study were included in this study than what is represented by all CACREP-accredited programs.

Due to differences in academic training and supervision requirements based upon profession, this research study is delimited to findings for counselor trainees in the profession of counseling and therefore cannot be applied to other mental health professions. Findings are also delimited to counselor trainees in the middle of their practicum semester, the results of which cannot be implied for counselor trainees in earlier or later stages of their clinical experience.

Definitions of Terms

As there are specific terms used repeatedly in this research, the following will clarify these terms in order to help comprehend this research study.

Academic

For purposes of this study, activities including coursework occurring in a university setting.

Clinical Experience

Counseling work experience with clients in a clinical setting.

Counselor Trainee

A master's level counseling student during their clinical experience.

Feedback

For purposes of this research study, evaluative comments and suggestions provided for educational and self-growth purposes.

Perception

According to the Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary (n.d.), defined as: (a) the physical sensation interpreted in the light of experience; (b) concept, or an abstract or generic idea generalized from particular instances; (c) consciousness, the quality or state of being aware especially of something within oneself, the state of being characterized by sensation, emotion, volition, and thought.

For purposes of this study, perceptions will be interpreted based upon responses of feelings of being prepared, perceived accuracy of expectations, beliefs concerning influences, and feelings about comfort levels as these relate to supervision experiences.

Practicum

The first semester of a counselor trainee's required clinical experience.

Practicum Supervision

Supervision occurring during the practicum semester of a counselor trainee's clinical experience.

Supervisor

For purposes of this research study, a counseling professional, faculty member, or doctoral student who provides individual or group supervision to counselor trainees.

Supervisory Relationship

The didactic relationship that occurs between counselor trainee and supervisor.

Organization of Remaining Dissertation Chapters

In this chapter, this study's research problems and the conceptual framework providing context for the study were introduced. The second chapter will review literature on developmental supervision models, identified components of supervision, research on practicum experience, and pre-practicum preparation. The third chapter will discuss the methodology used in this research study, including a description of the study's participants and sampling procedures, instrumentation, and data collection method. The fourth chapter discusses the findings, and the fifth chapter summarizes the findings of this study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this chapter is to examine literature related to practicum supervision and preparation of master's level counselor trainees for supervision. This chapter is organized into four sections. The first section reviews literature related to supervised clinical experience and the importance of this experience to developing professional counselors. Preparation for master's level practicum supervision is discussed in the second section through a review of literature supporting the need for preparation. The third examines literature on aspects of supervision included in this study. The final section summarizes this chapter and provides support for this research study.

Supervised Clinical Experience

One of the requirements for a student earning a master's degree in the field of professional counseling is to complete supervised clinical experience. The initial phase of supervised clinical experience is typically referred to as practicum and the final phase(s) as internship. In most states, supervised clinical experience continues post-master's as state licensure governing entities require additional supervised internship experience prior to application for licensure as a professional counselor. As a result, unlicensed counselors gain extensive clinical experience as supervised counselor trainees with one or

more supervisors overseeing their work and assisting in their development as professional counselors.

To prepare counseling students for practicum and internship, CACREP (Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs, n.d.) Standards require successful completion of specific core academic courses prior to beginning practicum. These core courses are designed to provide foundational knowledge and skills for clinical work with diverse client populations and issues, client assessment, and ethical guidelines for the counseling professional. In addition, students also must complete courses specific to their chosen area of counseling specialty; for instance, school counseling students must complete coursework in school counseling and for working with children and adolescents.

After completion of the core and specialty coursework, counseling students are eligible to begin practicum at a clinical location where they will work directly with clients. Bernard and Goodyear (2004) noted that during practicum and continuing through internship, counseling students transition to their new roles as professional counselor trainees. Experienced mental health professionals assist with this transition by providing counselor trainees with guidance, support, and resources in supervision.

According to CACREP Standards, clinical experience must include weekly individual on-site supervision at a counselor trainee's clinical location and group academic supervision at the trainee's university. Additionally, clinical locations may also require group on-site supervision, and universities may require individual academic supervision. As a result, to meet CACREP Standards, counselor trainees receive a minimum of two and one half hours of supervision per week, and may, depending on

clinical site and university requirements, actually receive twice the amount of supervision CACREP requires.

Bernard and Goodyear (2004) defined supervision as “an intervention provided by a more senior member of a profession to a more junior member or members of that same profession” (p. 8). Additionally they noted that the purpose of supervision is a combination of “enhancing the professional functioning of the more junior person(s), monitoring the quality of services offered to the clients that she, he, or they see, and serving as a gatekeeper for those who are to enter the particular profession” (p. 8). Previously, Hart (1982) defined counseling supervision as an ongoing educational process in which professional behaviors of trainees are monitored by a more experienced clinician. Hackney (2000) added that clinical supervisors have an ethical responsibility to help counselor trainees achieve competency while protecting the trainees’ clients from harm.

Counselor trainees enter their initial experiences at various levels of academic, professional, and personal growth, and likewise develop in each of these areas at varying paces, thus requiring flexible supervisory environments as a foundation to support and guide professional development. The concept of approaching supervision from the perspective of counselor trainee development is the basis for developmental supervision models first introduced in the 1950s that coincided with a trend in counseling theories based upon a developmental approach. The use of a developmental supervision model has gained considerable acceptance in recent years, and influenced core competency standards of supervisors developed at the Supervision Workshop during the 2002

Association of Psychology Postdoctoral and Internship Centers (APPIC) Competencies Conference. (Bernard & Goodyear, 2004)

Chagnon and Russell (1995) theorized that developmental supervision models are grounded in two basic assumptions: (a) counselor trainees move through a series of qualitatively different stages as they progress toward competence; and (b) each of these developmental stages requires a different supervisory environment to achieve optimal trainee satisfaction and growth. Watkins (1997) noted the importance of psychotherapy supervision for developing psychotherapists as it provides

... feedback about their performance; offers them guidance about what to do in times of confusion and need; allows them the opportunity to get alternate views and perspectives about patient dynamics, interventions, and course of treatment; stimulates or enhances curiosity about patients and the treatment experience; contributes to the process of forming a therapist “identity”; and serves as a “secure base” for supervisees letting them know that they are not alone in their learning about and performing psychotherapy. (p. 3)

Preparation for Master’s Level Supervision

The acquisition of therapeutic knowledge, skills, and attitudes prior to practicum is critical in the development of counselors. CACREP Standards for academic preparation of counselors includes coursework to gain therapeutic knowledge, learn skills, and provide client assessment (Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs, n.d.). Preparation for counseling students’ first clinical experiences and the required supervision of these experiences is assumed, but not specified in the CACREP Standards.

Supervision during practicum and internship is intended to oversee student application of academic knowledge to practice while protecting clients. Supervision is also designed to encourage personal development through self-introspection in the

supervisory process. However, providing a transitional experiential period guiding counseling students from the academic classroom to counselor trainees at an internship site is often overlooked in counselor education (Hackney, 1971), and an on-line search of CACREP-approved counselor education programs did not yield evidence within their curricula for coursework preparation for practicum supervision.

Importance of Preparation For Supervision

Without specific preparation for practicum supervision, counseling students transitioning from the classroom to supervised experience may be unprepared for and anxious about embracing the supervisory process as an opportunity for professional and personal growth. With the addition of the unfamiliar nature of supervisory evaluation, counselor trainees' anxiety and fears about the supervisory process increase as they enter practicum and their initial therapeutic work with real clients (Sweitzer & King, 2004). Fortunately, Cross and Brown (1993) noted that internship level counselor trainees typically become more comfortable and less anxious with the supervisory process over time as they become more experienced with the supervisory process and learn to focus more interpersonally.

In a research study examining the effect of pre-supervision preparation on master's level counselor trainees at the University of Northern Colorado, McGraw (1996) found that preparation for supervision did not decrease anxiety associated with supervision but it did effect counselor trainee perceptions of role ambiguity/conflict and overall ratings of their performance as a trainee. Using an experimental design, members of McGraw's experimental group observed a supervision preparation videotape. Both the experimental and control groups were assessed by self-ratings using Loesch and Rucker's

Counselor Evaluation Rating Scale (Loesch & Rucker, 1977) and House's Role Conflict Role Ambiguity Inventory (Olk & Friedlander, 1992), and by supervisor ratings using the Counselor Evaluation Rating Scale.

The results of McGraw's study concluded the experimental group had significant negative correlations between ratings of role ambiguity, role conflict, and ratings of overall performance, and that the control group did not experience any significant correlations on these variables. The results of this study suggest that by offering methods exposing pre-practicum students to some of the processes in supervision, new counselor trainees may be better equipped to participate in supervision with some advance knowledge of what will happen in supervision and clearer understanding of roles in the supervisory process.

Preparation for the Unknown or Unfamiliar

As supervision is an important part of the development of counselor trainees, preparing students for the supervisory process better equips them to be supervised and embrace supervision as a learning experience. Support for preparing counseling students for the supervisory process can be found throughout society as evidenced by the benefits of preparation for the unknown or the unfamiliar.

Through childbirth and parenting classes, parents are better prepared for the experience of giving birth to and raising their children. Lamaze classes offer techniques by which expectant parents can experience the birth process without benefit of anesthetics for pain (AllAboutMoms.com, n.d.). Emotional preparation for approaching death assists dying patients with accepting death and with their survivors' bereavement (Hospice Net, n.d.).

The experience of having a surgical procedure is often very frightening and anxiety provoking to patients. Surgery-related fears and anxieties can be compounded by the convalescent period following surgery. By preparing patients for what to expect before, during, and after surgery, medical practitioners observed that patients are less fearful of the surgical process and tend to positively respond to post-surgery convalescence and healing therapies (Doering et al., 2000; The Arthritis Society, 2003).

Evidence of the importance of preparation can also be found in the field of education. With the focus upon academic accountability in K-12 education, children are prepared for standardized testing concepts using similar tests in the years preceding the graded testing. For instance, second and third graders within Louisiana gain experience through the regular use of multiple choice and essay tests in preparation for taking the Louisiana Education Assessment Program test in fourth grade (French, 2004). Similarly, University of New Orleans' PrepStart Program (2002) prepares recent high school graduates for the rigors of college by introducing them to courses similar to what they can expect in their undergraduate curriculum.

There are various methods by which students might be prepared for practicum supervision. In addition to conversations with counselor trainees and future supervisors, students may have more formal supervision training provided through their academic programs in advance of beginning practicum. University programs may offer supervision courses designed to be taken by master's level counseling students. Future practicum students may be required to attend a workshop, seminar, or informational meeting on clinical experience at which practicum and supervision is discussed. Also, individual professors may incorporate teaching techniques and learning opportunities that are

similar to supervisory process, such as use of the Interpersonal Process Recall to help prepare trainees to examine the interpersonal dynamics of the counseling process during skills development (Riggs, 1979).

Literature presented in this section summarizes the importance of preparation for the unknown or the unfamiliar. Although preparation for the unknown and unfamiliar experiences of practicum supervision is not specifically required in CACREP Standards for coursework developed to provide a foundation for counselor trainees, students may experience some form of supervision pre-training or gain advance knowledge of the supervisory process. As there is a lack of literature on counselor trainees' perceptions of preparedness for the supervision, this research study intended to help fill this void.

Role-Induction

Through pre-training or preparation for the unknown and unfamiliar, assumptions can be tested and accurate expectations developed. Corey (2004) suggested client pre-screening for membership in a counseling group to include what to expect as a member in the group, and establishment of ground rules in the first session of a group to define what type of behavior is expected of the group's members.

Garfield (1994) cited numerous psychotherapy role-induction studies including Strupp and Bloxom's 1973 study of 122 weekly group therapy patients. Prior to participation in a twelve-week therapy group, Strupp and Bloxom asked one group of participants to view a role-induction film, another group participated in a role-induction interview, and the remaining control group received no role-induction preparation. The reported post-group results of this study showed significant higher gains on attitude and other in-therapy measures by those patients receiving role-induction pre-therapy than

those patients in the control group. These findings support Bednar and Kaul's (1994) comments that "pregroup training may be one of the more potent factors involved in creating successful treatment groups" (p. 644).

The results of Garfield's (1994) investigation into the relationship between client expectations of the duration of psychotherapy and premature termination reveal pre-therapy strategies that may help the client/therapist dyad prepare for premature termination. Garfield summarized the results of an experimental study by giving role-induction interviews to patients prior to their beginning therapy. The interview provided patients in the experimental group with a general overview of therapy, expectations for behaviors from the client and therapist, preparation for therapy-specific phenomena such as resistance, and therapeutic expectations after four months of therapy; patients in the control group received no role-induction information. The experimental group significantly exceeded the control group on 6 of 16 criterion measures including that of attendance at therapy sessions. Beutler, Machado, and Neufeldt (1994) reported literature to support their conclusion that pre-therapy preparation suggests congruent expectations between therapist and client on various outcomes of psychotherapy.

Similarly, role-induction of counselor trainees can help provide students with accurate expectations of their role in supervision and role of their supervisors (Sweitzer & King, 2004). Without supervisory role-induction, counselor trainees may enter practicum supervision with misconceptions about supervisory roles that can result in delaying the learning process until these roles are redefined. These misconceptions may be based upon past supervisory experiences, and exasperated by a lack of accurate information.

According to Skovholt and Rønnestad (1992), supervisors need to take into account age, previous paraprofessional training, and life experiences of supervised counselor trainees. Previous education in medical fields, parenting, past experiences with trauma, suffering intense personal stress, major loss, and/or addiction add to the developmental level and worldview of trainees that may influence counselor trainees' role expectations in the supervisory process.

Pre-training of students for practicum supervision will assist with supervisory role-induction as counselor trainees can examine their own expectations of their roles in supervision and that of their supervisors, expectations of which may require introspection of personal values and beliefs. Bernier (1980) stressed the need for supervisors to promote personal and psychological growth of counselor trainees through examination of personal values and beliefs resulting from their pre-training professional and personal development. Watkins (1997) theorized that professional and personal experiences form the basis of the "assumptive world" (p. 6), providing overall perspectives that influence supervisees' work with clients and interactions in the supervisory process.

By preparing counselor trainees for supervision, trainees are encouraged to "examine and critique [their] assumptions ... acknowledge and explore [their] concerns ... set clear goals and objectives" relating to their required clinical experience (Sweitzer & King, 2004, p. 85). Because students are prepared through coursework for their clinical work with clients, preparation for the unknown and unfamiliar experience of supervision may result in counselor trainees entering practicum better prepared to understand roles in the supervisory process and to view supervision as an integral part of their counselor development.

Supervisory Process

Bernard and Goodyear (2004) noted that supervision overlaps teaching, counseling, and consultation as strategies to assist developing counselors. Each of these unique strategies have differing intent typically based upon a predetermined effective process built upon a supportive relationship between a counselor trainee and a more experienced counseling professional.

Although the supervisory relationship is an integral part of the supervision experience and can have an effect upon the outcome of the supervisory experience (Bernard & Goodyear, 2004), this research study examined the perceptions of practicum-level counselor trainees concerning preparation for supervision based upon concrete aspects of supervision. These aspects referenced throughout supervision literature and across supervision models (Bernard & Goodyear; Watkins, 1997) are: (a) expectations of the supervisory experience; (b) structure and format of supervision; (c) use of feedback in supervision; and, (d) supervisory evaluation.

Expectations of the Supervisory Experience

Sweitzer and King (2004) identified four general goals of counseling supervision: (a) knowledge goals; (b) skill goals; (c) development goals; and, (d) self-assessment goals. As these goals form the foundation for continuing the educational process counselor trainees began in coursework, meeting specific objectives associated with these goals facilitates a smooth transition from counseling student to counseling professional. Yontef (1997) noted that how these objectives are to be attained must be clearly defined to avoid any misconceptions about expectations between trainees and their supervisors.

Counselor trainees begin practicum with an external focus and develop an internal focus through supportive supervision designed to help trainees achieve their supervisory objectives and reach the goals of supervision (Fall & Sutton, 2004). Supervisors use the teaching objectives of “counseling skills, case conceptualization, professional role, emotional awareness, and self-evaluation” to assist with counselor trainee growth and development (Holloway, 1997, p. 257).

Offering students information on practicum supervision through pre-training, including how supervision assists with counselor growth and development, will help clarify supervisory expectations and offer students an opportunity to discuss issues and concerns prior to entering practicum supervision. With clearer expectations of supervision, counselor trainees can begin to learn from supervision at its onset.

Although literature exists from supervisors’ perspectives about various aspects of supervision including what supervisors expect from counselor trainees during practicum, there is a dearth of literature on the expectations of counselor trainees relating to supervision. One of the intentions of this research study was to learn about what counselor trainees expect during and from practicum supervision.

Structure and Formats of Supervision

Hersey, Blanchard, and Johnson (2001) identified two dimensions of supervision, direction and support. Direction is defined as providing clear, specific directions through close supervision and frequent feedback. Support is nondirective and involves listening to counselor trainees, open dialogue in supervision, and high levels of emotional support for trainees. Hersey et al. suggested an appropriate mixture of direction and support based

upon maturity level that they defined as the combination of willingness and ability of each counselor trainee.

Stoltenberg (1993) wrote that beginning level counselor trainees are dependent upon structured supervision, direct didactic instruction, and non-confrontational support. In a survey of 237 counseling center trainees at the end of their first semester of clinical experience, Worthington and Roehlke (1979) found that supervisors who provided structure, teaching, and support were rated as highly competent. The counselor trainees in Worthington and Roehlke's study wanted to be taught how to counsel, and to be provided with ways to conceptualize cases and approach their clients' issues. They also wanted their supervisors to support them as they tried out their new skills.

To meet CACREP Standards, clinical location requirements, and university requirements, practicum level counselor trainees may discover that numerous hours per week are devoted to different types of required supervision. These trainees may not know what is expected to happen in each type of supervision or what to expect from each supervisor, or what is expected of them in each of these supervisory situations (Sweitzer & King, 2004).

Stoltenberg (1993) noted that new counselor trainees are highly motivated and experience heighten anxiety about working with clients and appearing competent to their supervisors and co-workers. Although a certain amount of anxiety is expected in supervision, too much can have a negative effect and delay or impede learning from supervision (Fall & Sutton, 2004).

Ellis and Ladany (1997) suggested that supervision outcome is related to initial experiences of role conflict and ambiguity relating to pre-supervision expectations and

lack of role induction. A study conducted by Olk and Friedlander (1992) included use of House's Role Conflict and Role Ambiguity Inventory developed by the researchers in an instrument to gather data on psychology student trainees' experiences in their clinical work. The results from this study infer that both role conflict and ambiguity are positively related to work-related anxiety, and beginning trainees experience more role ambiguity than did more advanced trainees. Yontef (1997) added that once trainees have developed clarity in their responsibilities within the supervision process, they can release any assumptions or unrealistic expectations about supervision and their focus can gravitate toward continued education and developing autonomy as a professional counselor.

Supervision provided at an internship site has a different focus than university supervision. This different focus is based upon the need for the internship site to protect its clients while helping the counselor trainee develop professionally and personally through client-counselor, co-worker, and supervisory experiences. Although university supervision also includes client protection and counselor development foci, university supervision's primary focus is to assist counselor trainees transition from classroom student to professional counselor. (Dodds, 1986)

Bernard and Goodyear (2004) wrote that individual supervision is considered the "cornerstone of professional development" (p. 209) and has a different purpose than group supervision. Because it is conducted one-on-one, individual supervision is more trainee-focused than group supervision, thus allowing for more freedom in structure and content. Group supervision is often devoted to discussing the cases of other trainees where peers provide more input and feedback than the group supervisor or as would occur in individual supervision.

Group supervision also provides supervisees with opportunities for vicarious learning and use of supervision as a resource (Hillerbrand, 1989). Through case presentations in group supervision, supervisees can learn about diverse clients and issues, be exposed to different perspectives on conceptualizing cases, and provided with ideas and resources they may find useful in the future.

Counseling students often engage in class discussions and are given written assignments to encourage exploration of personal values and develop self-awareness critical to effective counseling relationships. Both individual and group supervision offer opportunities for counselor trainees to address personal issues that may arise once they begin working with clients. Switzer and King (2004) noted that trainees often have contradictory emotions associated with discussing personal issues in supervision, realizing that these discussions will assist professional growth but may be difficult as “we do not always want to see ourselves clearly or change our ways of doing things” (p. 122). Also, gauging internal reactions to personal issue discussions during supervision may assist with recognition of similar behaviors in trainees’ counseling sessions (Neufeldt, Beutler, & Banchemo, 1997).

Literature cited in this section supports the importance of counselor trainees possessing knowledge of supervisory structure and formats to help them transition to the role of trainees. There exists an abundance of literature on the supervisory process including citations by Bernard and Goodyear (2004) on the various types of supervision and different models of supervision driving theoretical approaches to the structure of supervision. Yet again there is very little literature on how prepared counselor trainees believe they are to fully experience practicum supervision equipped with advance

knowledge of the supervisory process. This research study intended to help fill this gap in knowledge by investigating how prepared practicum level counselor trainees believe they were for the structure and formats of supervision.

Use of Feedback in Supervision

According to Hahn and Molnar (1991), feedback is a primary activity in clinical supervision. Bernard and Goodyear (2004) stated, “most supervisors conceptualize feedback per se as communicating to the [counselor trainee] an evaluation of particular behaviors as either on target or off, as either progressing toward competence or diverging in a different direction” (p. 31). Bernard and Goodyear cited numerous references to the importance of the use of interactional feedback as “ongoing and constant between the supervisor and [counselor trainee]” (p. 31) forming the basis for the majority of communication that occurs in supervision.

Rønnestad and Skovholt (1993) theorized that trainees enter their practicum experience with extreme anxiety as they attempt to apply their academic knowledge to actual practice with real clients. Sweitzer and King (2004) reported that counselor trainees have a need to be accepted by their supervisors and co-workers, and have concerns that they will not be viewed as competent in their new role as a counseling professional.

A study conducted by Leddick and Dye (1987) revealed that counselor trainees expect effective supervision will include more corrective feedback in the beginning of their clinical experience. Developmentally, Stoltenberg (1993) added that new counselor trainees need positive feedback and little direct confrontation with their supervisors and co-workers.

Sweitzer and King (2004) noted that counselor trainees may have received sufficient corrective feedback in their coursework to prepare them to not be frustrated by corrective feedback offered in supervision and to possibly appreciate the learning benefits of receiving corrective feedback. They may have also had opportunities providing their classmates with positive and corrective feedback, thus becoming more comfortable with giving feedback. Although counseling students may have completed numerous anonymous course evaluations, they may not have had the opportunity to provide corrective feedback directly to faculty and may not be comfortable providing corrective feedback to their supervisors.

Numerous studies have researched receptivity to giving and receiving feedback in groups. Robison, Stockton, Morran, and Uhl-Wagner (1991) noted that during early group development, providing corrective feedback was considered a high-risk activity with unpredictable results. Results from the study conducted by Morran, Stockton, and Bond (1991) on reactions to delivering feedback in a personal growth group indicated that delivering positive feedback is easier than delivering corrective feedback. This study also found that group members have concerns about how others will react to and perceive them when offering corrective feedback.

Stockton, Morran, and Harris (1991) along with other researchers have examined the relationships between receptivity to feedback and defensiveness levels, the results of which lend support for self-examination by counseling students relating to their own concerns about giving and receiving feedback prior to beginning practicum supervision. Hulse-Killacky and Page (1994) developed the Corrective Feedback Instrument to explore concerns with giving and receiving feedback within groups. Later, Page and

Hulse-Killacky (1999) developed the Corrective Feedback Self-Efficacy Instrument that can be used by counseling students to become aware of the effects their self-efficacy may have upon giving corrective feedback.

Feedback from peers offered within group supervision can provide diverse perspectives to a counselor trainee. Bernard and Goodyear (2004) cited references to literature linking the ability of novices, i.e. counselor trainees, to communicate with other novices using similar language versus communicating with experts, i.e. supervisors, using unfamiliar language. Thus through similar language, group supervision provides opportunities for exchange of peer-based feedback that may be more comfortable for counselor trainees to give and receive than feedback in individual supervision.

According to Ryan, Brutus, Greguras, and Hakel (2000), receptivity to feedback is influenced by various factors including self-awareness, self-esteem, age, similarities between the feedback giver and receiver, and previous acquaintance with the feedback giver. Although interventions such as the Interpersonal Recall Process (Riggs, 1979) can be used in coursework to prepare students for supervisory feedback, the influences cited by Ryan et al. might have a significant impact on receptivity of counselor trainees to supervisory feedback.

Preparation for feedback in supervision should provide future counselor trainees with information about how feedback is used in supervision to promote counselor development and growth. Even though trainees may not be comfortable with receiving or giving feedback, having an understanding of the purpose of supervisory feedback developed through guided coaching (London & Smither, n.d.) may help reduce the anxiety and apprehension associated with feedback in supervision.

As feedback is a critical component of supervision, it is important to learn more about how counselor trainees new to supervision feel about being prepared to receive and give feedback, and how they believe feedback influences their supervisory experiences. Although literature exists on receptivity to feedback and on the importance of supervisory feedback as a learning tool, preparation for supervisory feedback is another aspect of practicum supervision this research study investigated from the perspective of counselor trainees.

Supervisory Evaluation

Supervisory evaluation is defined by Switzer and King (2004) as the process by which the defined goals of supervision are measured against actual outcomes and counselor trainee growth. Watkins (1997) noted that developmental progress must be regularly evaluated in order for a counselor trainee to experience monitored growth and for clients to be protected.

Robiner, Fuhrman, and Ristvedt (1993) theorized that there are two forms of evaluation in supervision, formative and summative. They described formative evaluation as the process of using direct feedback to assist counselor trainees in facilitating skills and professional development. Summative evaluation occurs when the supervisor decides how supervisees compare to standards by which the trainees are educationally or administratively judged.

Ellis and Ladany (1997) stated, “it can be argued that [trainee] evaluation is the sine quo non [or a pre-condition] of supervision outcome ... interesting and unfortunately, only 10 investigations attempted to assess aspects of [trainee] evaluation ... and [evaluations] were not always clearly defined for [trainees]” (p. 483). Through an

on-going process of evaluation and intentional feedback, counselor trainees experience professional and personal growth through supervisory evaluation (Yontef, 1997), and begin to feel increasing comfort with taking risks in supervision (Fall & Sutton, 2004).

Evaluation is a reflective process intended to gauge progress and promote future development (Goodyear & Nelson, 1997). Although supervisory style may determine the foci and methods used for evaluation, counselor trainees need to understand what is expected of them as developing counselors and for their supervisors to clearly define how and when evaluation will occur, and to be provided with guidance as to how to use evaluation as expected and valuable learning tool (Bernard & Goodyear, 2004; Sweitzer & King, 2004).

The process of evaluation in supervision is one of the lesser-defined and structured aspects of supervision (Bernard & Goodyear, 2004). Bernard and Goodyear stressed that some form of evaluation should be conducted throughout supervision, although counselor trainees are often very anxious about their first formal evaluative process that occurs at the end of their practicum semester. Because counselor trainees are students and receive a grade during practicum, different individuals in supervisory roles evaluate these trainees.

As supervisory evaluation is not clearly defined and is different than coursework evaluation, advance knowledge of the supervisory evaluation process will better prepare counselor trainees for what to expect of practicum evaluation. This research study intended to learn more about counselor trainees' expectations of the evaluative aspect of practicum supervision. This study also intended to gain insight into how evaluation affects the trainees' participation in risk-taking behaviors in supervision.

Summary

Although CACREP Standards require supervised clinical experience, these standards do not require any specific supervision-related preparation coursework be provided to counseling students. Without such preparation, counseling students may begin practicum supervision without accurate expectations of supervision, lack of understanding of the process and structure of supervision, receptivity to the use of feedback, or knowledge about how they will be evaluated as counselor trainees.

As there are no standards defined by which to prepare students for supervision, it is unknown whether counseling programs are addressing the supervisory process through some form of pre-practicum supervision training or by infusing components of supervision in pre-practicum core courses. Without pre-practicum exposure to supervision, counseling students may enter the unknown realm of counseling supervision unprepared to fully experience the developmental process of supervision, or with misconceptions of the counseling supervisory relationship and supervisory process that may impede growth as a professional counselor.

This research study investigated perceptions of practicum counselor trainees to help understand how prepared they believed they were for supervision. Specifically, this study posed questions relating to the primary aspects of supervision presented in this chapter to explore perceptions of readiness for practicum supervision. This study also investigated possible explanations as to what factors may lead practicum counselor trainees to feel more or less prepared for the supervisory process.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Based upon common elements of various developmental models of supervision (Loganbill, Hardy, & Delworth, 1982; Rønnestad & Skovholt, 1993; Stoltenberg, 1993), this research study examined counselor trainees' perceptions of supervision preparedness in relation to the following variables: (a) expectations of supervision; (b) understanding of the structure and formats used in supervision; (c) receptivity to and use of feedback in supervision; and (d) the evaluative component of supervision.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate counselor trainees' perceptions of their preparedness for practicum supervision. Specifically, this study examined counselor trainees' perceptions of how prepared they believed they were for individual and group supervisory experiences associated with practicum, the initial clinical experience of counseling students.

Research Question

One general research question and six research sub-questions were posed in this study.

General research question:

What are counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision? Research sub-questions:

1. Is there a relationship between counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceived preparation for various aspects of supervision?
2. Is there a relationship between counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and prior concerns about being supervised?
3. Is there a relationship between counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceptions of practicum supervision experience to date?
4. Is there a relationship between counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and comfort experienced with receiving feedback in supervision?
5. To what extent do counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision vary according to whether their academic program has a doctoral program of study, type of practicum site, type of supervisors, and hours per week in supervision?
6. To what extent do counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision vary according to formal supervision preparation received prior to beginning practicum?

Research Hypotheses

Listed below are each of this study's research sub-questions, the hypotheses tested to answer each question, and the specific statistical procedures conducted to test each hypothesis. Data included in these statistical procedures resulted from responses to questions on the survey instrument developed for this study, the Counselor Trainee Preparedness Perceptions Survey – Practicum Supervision (CTPPS-PS, see Appendix D); more information on the CTPPS-PS is included in the section entitled "Instrumentation." The results of these statistical procedures and the test results for each hypothesis are summarized in Chapter Four.

Research Sub-Question 1:

Is there a relationship between counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceived preparation for various aspects of supervision?

Research Hypothesis 1.1:

There is a relationship between counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceived general preparation for supervision. This hypothesis was tested based upon the results of the following four sub-hypotheses, 1.1.1, through 1.1.4.

Research Sub-Hypothesis 1.1.1:

There is a relationship between counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceived prior knowledge of the purpose of supervision. Pearson's product-moment correlation was used to examine the relationship between CTPPS-PS question B6, overall perceptions of preparedness, and question B1, knowledge accuracy of supervisory purpose.

Research Sub-Hypothesis 1.1.2:

There is a relationship between counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceived preparation to accept guidance and support from supervisor(s). Pearson's product-moment correlation was used to examine the relationship between CTPPS-PS question B6, overall perceptions of preparedness, and question B3, preparation to accept supervisory guidance and support.

Research Sub-Hypothesis 1.1.3:

There is a relationship between counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceived preparation to ask for assistance from supervisor(s). Pearson's product-moment correlation was used to examine the relationship between CTPPS-PS question B6, overall perceptions of preparedness, and question B4, preparedness to ask for supervisory assistance.

Research Sub-Hypothesis 1.1.4:

There is a relationship between counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceived preparation for what would be required in supervision. Pearson's product-moment correlation was used to examine the relationship between CTPPS-PS question B6, overall perceptions of preparedness, and question B5, preparation for the requirements of supervisions.

Research Hypothesis 1.2:

There is a relationship between counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceptions of the accuracy of pre-practicum expectations for practicum supervision. This hypothesis was tested based upon the results of the following three sub-hypotheses, 1.2.1, 1.2.2, and 1.2.3.

Research Sub-Hypothesis 1.2.1:

There is a relationship between counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceptions of the accuracy of pre-practicum expectations for what would be experienced in practicum supervision. Pearson's product-moment correlation was used to examine the relationship between CTPPS-PS question B6, overall perceptions of preparedness, and question C1, accuracy of supervisory experience expectations.

Research Sub-Hypothesis 1.2.2:

There is a relationship between counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceptions of the accuracy of pre-practicum expectations for what supervisors would provide to trainees. Pearson's product-moment correlation was used to examine the relationship between CTPPS-PS question B6, overall perceptions of preparedness, and question C2, accuracy of expectations of what supervisors would provide.

Research Sub-Hypothesis 1.2.3:

There is a relationship between counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceptions of the accuracy of pre-practicum expectations for what supervisors would require from trainees. Pearson's product-moment correlation was used to examine the relationship between CTPPS-PS question B6, overall perceptions of preparedness, and question C3, accuracy of expectations of what supervisors would require.

Research Hypothesis 1.3:

There is a relationship between counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceptions of preparation for practicum supervisory structure and process. This hypothesis was tested based upon the results of the following seven sub-hypotheses, 1.3.1 through 1.3.7.

Research Sub-Hypothesis 1.3.1:

There is a relationship between counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceptions of preparation for how supervision sessions would be structured. Pearson's product-moment correlation was used to examine the relationship between CTPPS-PS question B6, overall perceptions of preparedness, and question D1, preparation for structure of supervision sessions.

Research Sub-Hypothesis 1.3.2:

There is a relationship between counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and awareness that supervisors may approach supervision differently. Pearson's product-moment correlation was used to examine the relationship between CTPPS-PS question B6, overall perceptions of preparedness, and question D2, awareness of different approaches to supervision.

Research Sub-Hypothesis 1.3.3:

There is a relationship between counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceptions of preparation for what happens in individual supervision sessions. Pearson's product-moment correlation was used to examine the relationship between CTPPS-PS question B6, overall perceptions of preparedness, and question D3, preparation for what happens in individual supervision.

Research Sub-Hypothesis 1.3.4:

There is a relationship between counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceptions of preparation for what happens in group supervision sessions. Pearson's product-moment correlation was used to examine the relationship between CTPPS-PS question B6, overall perceptions of preparedness, and question D4, preparation for what happens in group supervision.

Research Sub-Hypothesis 1.3.5:

There is a relationship between counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceptions of preparation for what happens in practicum site supervision sessions. Pearson's product-moment correlation was used to examine the relationship between CTPPS-PS question B6, overall perceptions of preparedness, and question D5, preparation for what happens in site supervision.

Research Sub-Hypothesis 1.3.6:

There is a relationship between counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceptions of preparation for what happens in university supervision sessions. Pearson's product-moment correlation was used to examine the relationship between CTPPS-PS question B6, overall perceptions of preparedness, and question D6, preparation for what happens in university supervision.

Research Sub-Hypothesis 1.3.7:

There is a relationship between counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceptions of preparation for addressing personal issues in supervision. Pearson's product-moment correlation was used to examine the relationship

between CTPPS-PS question B6, overall perceptions of preparedness, and question D7, preparation to address personal issues during supervision.

Research Hypothesis 1.4:

There is a relationship between counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and supervisory feedback. This hypothesis was tested based upon the results of the following five sub-hypotheses, 1.4.1 through 1.4.7.

Research Sub-Hypothesis 1.4.1:

There is a relationship between counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceptions of preparation for receiving feedback from supervisors. Pearson's product-moment correlation was used to examine the relationship between CTPPS-PS question B6, overall perceptions of preparedness, and question F1, preparation for receiving feedback from supervisors.

Research Sub-Hypothesis 1.4.2:

There is a relationship between counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceptions of preparation for receiving feedback from other counselor trainees. Pearson's product-moment correlation was used to examine the relationship between CTPPS-PS question B6, overall perceptions of preparedness, and question F2, preparation for receiving feedback from other trainees.

Research Sub-Hypothesis 1.4.3:

There is a relationship between counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceptions of preparation for giving feedback to other counselor trainees. Pearson's product-moment correlation was used to examine the

relationship between CTPPS-PS question B6, overall perceptions of preparedness, and question F3, preparation for giving feedback to other trainees.

Research Sub-Hypothesis 1.4.4:

There is a relationship between counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceptions of preparation for giving feedback to supervisors. Pearson's product-moment correlation was used to examine the relationship between CTPPS-PS question B6, overall perceptions of preparedness, and question F4, preparation for giving feedback to supervisors.

Research Sub-Hypothesis 1.4.5:

There is a relationship between counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceptions of preparation for receiving feedback from supervisors as a result of feedback received during coursework. Pearson's product-moment correlation was used to examine the relationship between CTPPS-PS question B6, overall perceptions of preparedness, and question F5, effect of coursework feedback on feedback preparation.

Research Hypothesis 1.5:

There is a relationship between counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceptions of evaluation in supervision. This hypothesis was tested based upon the results of the following three sub-hypotheses, 1.5.1, 1.5.2, and 1.5.3.

Research Sub-Hypothesis 1.5.1:

There is a relationship between counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and awareness of the evaluation process. Pearson's product-

moment correlation was used to examine the relationship between CTPPS-PS question B6, overall perceptions of preparedness, and question E1, awareness of evaluation methods.

Research Sub-Hypothesis 1.5.2:

There is a relationship between counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceptions of the influence of evaluation on their supervisory experience. Pearson's product-moment correlation was used to examine the relationship between CTPPS-PS question B6, overall perceptions of preparedness, and question E2, influence of evaluation on supervisory experience.

Research Sub-Hypothesis 1.5.3:

There is a relationship between counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and comfort in disclosing a lack of competence during individual supervision. Pearson's product-moment correlation was used to examine the relationship between CTPPS-PS question B6, overall perceptions of preparedness, and question E3, comfort level to disclose lack of competence.

Research Sub-Question 2:

Is there a relationship between counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and prior concerns about being supervised?

Research Hypothesis 2.1:

There is a relationship between counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and prior concerns about being supervised. Pearson's product-moment correlation was used to examine the relationship between CTPPS-PS question B6, overall perceptions of preparedness, and question B2, prior supervisory concerns.

Research Sub-Question 3:

Is there a relationship between counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceptions of practicum supervision experience to date?

Research Hypothesis 3.1:

There is a relationship between counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceptions of practicum supervision experience to date.

Pearson's product-moment correlation was used to examine the relationship between CTPPS-PS question B6, overall perceptions of preparedness, and question G1, supervision experience to date.

Research Sub-Question 4:

Is there a relationship between counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and comfort experienced with receiving feedback in supervision?

Research Hypothesis 4.1:

There is a relationship between counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and comfort experienced with receiving feedback in supervision. Pearson's product-moment correlation was used to examine the relationship between CTPPS-PS question B6, overall perceptions of preparedness, and question F6, overall comfort with receiving supervisory feedback.

Research Sub-Question 5:

To what extent do counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision vary according to whether their academic program has a doctoral program of study, type of practicum site, type of supervisors, and hours per week in supervision?

Research Hypothesis 5.1:

There are differences in counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision based on being in an academic counseling program that has a counseling doctoral program of study. Independent-samples *t* test was used to examine differences in question B6, overall perceptions of preparedness, based upon question A5, whether or not the academic program had a doctoral program of study.

Research Hypothesis 5.2:

There are differences in counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision based on type of practicum site. One-way analysis of variance was used to examine differences in CTPPS-PS question B6, overall perceptions of preparedness, based upon question A6, type of practicum site.

Research Hypothesis 5.3:

There are differences in counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision based on types of supervisors. This hypothesis was tested based upon the results of the following four sub-hypotheses, 5.3.1 through 5.3.4.

Research Sub-Hypothesis 5.3.1: There are differences in counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision based on type of individual site supervisor. One-way analysis of variance was used to examine differences in CTPPS-PS question B6, overall perceptions of preparedness, based upon question A7, type of individual site supervisor.

Research Sub-Hypothesis 5.3.2: There are differences in counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision based on type of group site supervisor. One-way analysis of variance was used to examine differences in CTPPS-PS

question B6, overall perceptions of preparedness, based upon question A8, type of group site supervisor.

Research Sub-Hypothesis 5.3.3: There are differences in counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision based on type of individual university supervisor. One-way analysis of variance was used to examine differences in CTPPS-PS question B6, overall perceptions of preparedness, based upon question A9, type of individual university supervisor.

Research Sub-Hypothesis 5.3.4: There are differences in counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision based on type of group university supervisor. One-way analysis of variance was used to examine differences in CTPPS-PS question B6, overall perceptions of preparedness, based upon question A10, type of group university supervisor.

Research Hypothesis 5.4:

There is a relationship between counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and total hours of supervision per week. Pearson's product-moment correlation was used to examine the relationship between CTPPS-PS question B6, overall perceptions of preparedness, and question A11, total hours of supervision per week.

Research Sub-Question 6:

To what extent do counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision vary according to formal supervision preparation received prior to beginning practicum?

Research Hypothesis 6.1:

There are differences in counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision based on type of formal supervision preparation received prior to beginning practicum. One-way analysis of variance was used to examine differences in CTPPS-PS question B6, overall perceptions of preparedness, based upon question A12, type of formal practicum preparation received.

Sample

The sample participants in this study were 156 counseling students enrolled in practicum courses at 27 CACREP-accredited counseling programs across the United States during the spring semester of 2005. The participants were contacted through their practicum professors or other program faculty, and participation was voluntary. The following sections summarize the personal demographics of the participants.

Personal Demographics of Sample

The participants were 84.6% (n=132) female and 15.4% (n=24) male. Although the specific age of each respondent was not requested, the majority of the participants were less than 30 years old, with 39.1% (n=61) indicating they were 24 years or younger and 35.9% (n=56) indicating the 25-29 years old age grouping. The cultural make-up of the sample was predominantly Caucasian with 78.8% (n=123) of the participants providing this information. Table 1 details the participant's personal demographics.

Table 1

Personal demographics of participants

	Frequency	Percentage
Gender:		
Male	24	15.4
Female	132	84.6
Age:		
24 or younger	61	39.1
25-29	56	35.9
30-34	19	12.2
35-39	7	4.5
40-44	5	3.2
45-49	1	0.6
50 or older	7	4.5
Culture:		
African-American	10	6.4
American Indian or Alaska Native	4	2.6
Asian	3	1.9
Caucasian	123	78.8
Hispanic	7	4.5
Middle Eastern	2	1.3
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	1	.6
Other	6	3.8

Variables

Variables of interest in this research study were provided on the Counselor Trainee Preparedness Perceptions Survey - Practicum Supervision (CTPPS-PS) survey. In addition to providing demographic information, participants indicated their perceptions relating to preparedness for practicum supervision based upon clearly defined differentiated answers, in multiple-choice, multiple-option, or Likert-scale format.

Instrumentation

The instrument used in this study was the Counselor Trainee Preparedness Perceptions Survey - Practicum Supervision (CTPPS-PS) survey, developed by the researcher. This instrumentation section is divided into three sections: (a) development of the CTPPS-PS survey; (b) validity and reliability of the survey; and (c) scoring procedures and interpretation of the survey.

Development of Survey

As there were no reliable and valid methods or instruments available to collect data to answer the research question, a survey was developed for this study. There is extensive literature, including that of Bourque and Fielder (2003), Fink (2003b), and Frary (1996), identifying the steps required for developing a survey and addressing special considerations that are inherent in this process. These steps and considerations include the following: (a) clarification of survey objectives and research questions in order to ensure the survey is a valid instrument; (b) question format selection to match type of statistical analysis selected; (c) survey items organized and arranged in logical

order; and, (d) the distribution of the survey with a cover letter and instructions (Fink, 2003b; Moyer & Stacey, 1982).

Based upon the purpose and research objectives of the survey, a list of possible questions was written for the survey. Frary (1996) stated “a clear-cut need for every question should be established” (on-line p. 1). Additional methods for identifying possible survey questions were individual interviews with potential survey participants as suggested by Bourque and Fielder (2003), as well as discussions with practicum supervisors familiar with the research topic.

Questions included in the survey used simple language and common concepts of short and concise questions with simple and clear answer selections. Multiple answer questions were avoided as well as lengthy answer lists from which to choose. Questions were clearly worded to remove any doubt as to meaning, although multiple separate questions were included when clarification was not possible in a single question. Cultural and diversity issues associated with question wordage and language level were also addressed, and wordage clarified when appropriate. Text areas were offered to allow for participants to provide comments about the content of the survey. (Converse & Presser, 1986; Couper, Traugott, & Lamias, 2001)

The CTPPS-PS was subjected to expert review by a panel of seven doctoral students experienced as supervisors of practicum counselor trainees. These supervisors provided feedback about the survey including whether they believed perceptions relating to practicum supervision were adequately identified in the survey. Supervisors also reviewed the survey for functional reliability and face validity, and provided suggestions

for improvement. These improvements were deemed necessary and the suggested changes were made to the CTPPS-PS.

To assist in establishing functional reliability and face validity (Creswell, 2002) and to determine if there was adequate data variability, the CTPPS-PS was pilot tested in paper format with eleven current or recent practicum students at the University of New Orleans. Comments from the pilot test provided suggestions on the overall appearance of the survey and on the ease in completing the instrument. All comments provided during the pilot testing of the survey were considered and changes were made as deemed appropriate. The revised CTPPS-PS was again pilot tested with thirteen practicum students at the University of New Orleans; the data results of these two pilot tests are summarized under the section entitled “Pilot Studies Using the CTPPS-PS.”

Validity and Reliability Issues of Survey Development and Administration

Specific validity issues arise in survey development and administration. External validity was somewhat controlled for in this study by careful selection of a sample from the survey’s target population, where all members of the target population are eligible by being able to meet the selection criteria for the survey. Internal validity issues also might have been affected by the sample selection process, and were best minimized as all members of the target population had an equal chance of being selected for the sample grouping (Fink, 2003b, 2003c).

New methods of electronic survey administration using the Internet greatly increase threats to internal validity associated with random subject selection. Creswell (2002) noted that identifying and contacting possible survey participants will be influenced by whether these participants have been included in accessible lists of the

target population. In addition, for electronic on-line surveys, it is important to determine whether potential participants have access to computers and the Internet. Familiarity with using a computer to respond to a survey is also an issue to be considered. Suggested as an option by participants in a study conducted by Shannon, Johnson, Searcy, and Lott (2002), a paper format option for the CTPPS-PS survey may have remedied concerns, apprehension, or accessibility restrictions associated with completing a survey on-line at a particular university, but also delayed obtaining results.

Fink (2003a) stated that the reliability of the obtained results of a survey are influenced by sampling techniques that may result in random errors and measurement errors inherent in how well the survey performs as a measurement instrument. Random errors and measurement errors were considered during the developmental of the CTPPS-PS survey and its administration, with special considerations for Internet-based surveys where, according to Lenert and Skoczen (2002), Internet-recruitment and survey administration approaches may produce results that limit generalizability beyond the survey participants.

Litwin (2003) stated “one of the major drawbacks of new survey instruments is that they are often nothing more than collections of questions that seem to the surveyors to fit well together ... it is important that you calculate internal consistency reliability” (p. 25) to evaluate how well similar items measure the same variable. Additional questions were incorporated into the CTPPS-PS following Litwin’s suggestion that more than one question measure a specific variable, thus providing assessment of internal consistency not available when a variable is measured by a single question. The ability to use multiple questions to measure a variable is an advantage for electronic surveys as the length of

electronic surveys are not affected by increases in printing and mailing expenses for longer paper surveys.

Internal consistency of questions on the CTPPS-PS was estimated at .97 using Cronbach's alpha for the total scale based upon the final results of this study. Cronbach's alpha was used as it assesses how well a set of questions measures a single one-dimensional latent construct, with .60 or higher considered acceptable; Norman and Streiner (1994) noted .60 as the cutoff for factor co-efficients to exceed the criteria for samples $N=100$. The separate alphas for each subset of questions are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2

Internal consistency of CTPPS-PS' subsets of questions

Subset of questions	Number	Cronbach's alpha
General practicum supervision and preparation	6	.85
Practicum expectations	3	.93
Practicum supervision structure and sessions	7	.90
Practicum supervision feedback	6	.95
Practicum supervision evaluation	3	.71

Pilot Studies Using the CTPPS-PS

The CTPPS-PS was initially pilot tested in paper format by eleven current or recent practicum students at the University of New Orleans. This version of the CTPPS-PS contained twenty-seven variable data questions. Two of these questions were removed

as a result of pilot testing and committee recommendations. The remaining twenty-five variable data questions were retained for the final version of the CTPPS-PS, and the data collected on these questions were analyzed for evidence of variability.

Twenty-four of the retained CTPPS-PS questions were on a four-point scale, with the remaining question on a five-point scale. The range on the four-point scale questions was three points on 54% of the responses and 2 on the remaining 46%; the minimum standard deviation was .70 and the maximum was 1.13. On the five-point scale question, the range was 3 points and the standard deviation was 1.30. Based upon the responses of the eleven pilot test participants, these results indicated the presence of data variability on the variable questions on the CTPPS-PS.

The second version of the CTPPS-PS was pilot tested with thirteen practicum students at the University of New Orleans, eight of whom had received two hours of pre-practicum training. This version of the CTPPS-PS contained 25 variable data questions on a seven-point scale. Additional evidence of variability for the questions on the CTPPS-PS was found during the second pilot test. Specifically, the responses to the twenty-five questions on the CTPPS-PS had a range of 2 to 6 points, with 64% of the questions having a range of 6 points. The minimum standard deviation on the twenty-five questions was .66 and the maximum was 2.03. Based upon the responses of these thirteen pilot test participants, these results provided substantiation for the presence of data variability on the variable questions on the CTPPS-PS. Furthermore, based upon the presence of data variability in the combined responses of the twenty-four pilot tests participants, these results indicated the CTPPS-PS should yield a range of responses from the sample population on the variable questions on the CTPPS-PS.

Scoring Procedures and Score Interpretation

The CTPPS-PS contains 38 questions, three for personal demographic data, nine for university and supervision demographic data, and 26 for variable data. The 26 variable data questions measure perceptions on one of five different variables in this study. The breakdown by variable is listed below.

1. General supervision knowledge/preparation/perceptions – seven questions
2. Supervision expectations – three questions
3. Structure and formats of supervision – seven questions
4. Feedback in supervision – six questions
5. Evaluation in supervision – three questions

The 26 variable data questions were in Likert-scale format, positively worded, and scored straightforwardly on a seven-point scale. A text area was also available at the end of the CTPPS-PS to allow for written comments to be made by each survey respondent.

Data Collection

Survey Research

Because this study focused on perceptions of practicum students regarding their preparedness for practicum supervision, it was appropriate to utilize survey research as the methodological approach to gather data for this study. McMillan and Schumacher (2001) noted that survey methodology provides a method to collect large amounts of information to learn about people's attitudes, beliefs, values, behavior, opinions, and demographics. Survey research, therefore, provided a method by which to gather information on practicum students' perceptions.

Procedure

Following approval of the University of New Orleans Human Subjects Review Committee to conduct this study (see Appendix A), program chairpersons or program coordinators at approximately 100 CACREP-accredited counseling programs in the United States were contacted electronically by email (see Appendix B) within the first month of the spring 2005 semester to request their approval to distribute the Internet address for the survey to practicum students in their program.

Sixty counseling programs were initially selected to request student participation, and were contacted following approval of the University of New Orleans Human Subjects Review Committee to contact these programs. Selection of these programs was based upon: (a) ensuring each state had at least one program to be contacted; and, (b) 50% of the programs had counseling doctoral programs. Due to lower than anticipated approval responses from these 60 programs, 40 more programs were selected. The 40 additional programs were selected: (a) by under-represented geographical region based upon approvals received within 10 days of the initial request; (b) by under-represented programs of study without doctoral programs likewise based upon approvals received within the initial 10-day period; and, (c) from universities with larger student populations in an effort to increase the number of potential survey participants. Approval was received from the University of New Orleans Human Subjects Review Committee to contact these additional 40 programs.

Twenty-seven counseling programs agreed to request their student participate in this research, and provided faculty contact information for distribution of the survey to

their students. Three counseling programs declined participation citing too many prior requests from other researchers.

Demographics of Participants' University Programs

Participants attended universities located in 16 states. Based upon geographic regions as identified by the United States Census Bureau, 33.3% (n=52) of the participants attended universities in the Southeastern United States, 27.6% (n=43) in the Midwestern United States, 22.4% (n=35) in the Northeastern United States, 13.5% (n=21) in the Southwestern United States, and 3.2% (n=5) in the Western United States. 59.0% (n=92) of the participants attended universities with a doctoral counseling program. Participant demographics relating to the participants' university programs are detailed in Table 3.

Table 3

Demographics of participants' university programs

	Frequency	Percentage
United States geographic region:		
Midwestern (Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, Wisconsin)	43	27.6
Northeastern (Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Washington, D.C.)	35	22.4
Southeastern (Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia)	52	33.3

Table 3 continued

Demographics of participants' university programs

	Frequency	Percentage
United States geographic region continued:		
Southwestern United States (Arizona, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas)	21	13.5
Western (Alaska, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Washington, Wyoming)	5	3.2
Counseling Doctoral Program:		
Yes	92	59.0
No	64	41.0

Demographics of Participants' Practicum Experience

Of the total participants, 92.9% (n=145) attended universities where their practicum experience included counseling real clients. Of these participants, 62.1% (n=90) counseled clients in either lab-based or field sites directly owned or administered through their university's counseling academic program; the remaining 37.9% (n=55) counseled clients at a field site, such as an agency, school, in-/out-patient facility, that was not directly owned or administered through the university's counseling academic program. Only 5.8% (n=9) of the participants "counseled" role-playing clients or fellow students in a classroom setting or lab that was directly owned or administered through their counseling academic program. Table 4 details demographic responses relating to practicum experience.

Table 4

Demographics of participants' practicum experience

	Frequency	Percentage
Field site, such as an agency, school, in-/out-patient facility, that is not directly owned or administered through respondent's counseling academic program	90	57.7
Lab-based or field site that is directly owned or administered through respondent's counseling academic program at which "real" clients are counseled	55	35.3
Classroom setting or lab-based that is directly owned or administered through respondent's counseling academic program at which role-playing clients or students in the counseling academic program are "counseled"	9	5.8
Other	2	1.3

Administration of the CTPPS-PS

The CTPPS-PS survey developed for this research (see Appendix D and the previous section entitled "Instrumentation") was administered anonymously on-line through a commercial Internet survey provider. Nineteen faculty members distributed the CTPPS-PS' Internet link electronically or through a distributed copy of the Consent Form (see Appendix C). Eight faculty members chose to provide students with a paper format of the survey, and these surveys were returned individually or in masse as determined by each faculty member. Upon receipt, surveys completed in paper format were later entered into the on-line form to help prevent errors in manual coding of data. In total, 44.2% (n=69) of the participants completed the survey on-line and 55.8% (n=87) completed the survey in paper format. The survey's on-line return rate was 32%, and the paper format return rate was 78%.

To minimize the effects of varying practicum supervision experiences incurred by the participants, data collection was restricted to a 30-day period during the first half of the academic semester. Upon completion of this data collection period, data collected on-line and entered on-line from returned paper format surveys was electronically obtained on-line for analysis.

Data Analysis

Once survey data were collected, descriptive analysis was conducted using the statistical software SPSS 10.0 for Windows. Summary descriptive statistics were used for the total sample as well as for data collected for the five non-demographic variables.

Inferential analysis of the data included the use of Independent-samples *t* test and univariate analysis of variance to examine differences in means scores to determine whether groups differ significantly among themselves on the variables being studied (Hinkle, Wiersma, & Jurs, 2001). Correlation coefficients were used to analyze relationships between variables in this study. Specifically, Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient was used to determine if correlations exist between counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and: (a) various aspects of supervision; (b) prior concerns about being supervised; (c) practicum supervision experience to date; and (d) comfort experienced with receiving feedback in supervision. Chapter 4 details the results of these analyses.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

This chapter will present this research study's findings. The method of data collection used was the Counselor Trainee Preparedness Perceptions Survey - Practicum Supervision (CTPPS-PS), a survey designed for this study to examine perceptions of practicum students regarding their preparedness for practicum supervision.

Research Questions and Results

There was one general research question, "What are counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision?," and six research sub-questions for this study. The specific hypotheses testing each question and the results are discussed in this section.

Research Sub-Question 1

Research sub-question 1 asked: "Is there a relationship between counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceived preparation for various aspects of supervision?" This sub-question was answered by research hypotheses 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, and 1.5, with results supporting all five hypotheses. Each of these hypotheses included several sub-hypotheses, the results of which are discussed below and summarized in Table 5 at the end of the discussion.

Research Hypothesis 1.1

Research hypothesis 1.1 stated: “There is a relationship between counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceived general preparation for supervision.” This hypothesis was supported as the relationship between counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceived general preparation for supervision was significant based upon significant results for each of the four following sub-hypotheses, 1.1.1 through 1.1.4.

Research Sub-Hypothesis 1.1.1

Research sub-hypothesis 1.1.1 stated: “There is a relationship between counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceived prior knowledge of the purpose of supervision.” This sub-hypothesis was supported as the correlation between counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision ($M = 4.45, SD = 1.67$) and perceived prior knowledge of the purpose of supervision ($M = 4.19, SD = 1.72$) was significant, $r(154) = .78, p < .001$.

Research Sub-Hypothesis 1.1.2

Research sub-hypothesis 1.1.2 stated: “There is a relationship between counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceived preparation to accept guidance and support from supervisor(s).” This sub-hypothesis was supported as the correlation between counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision ($M = 4.45, SD = 1.67$) and perceived preparation to accept guidance and support from supervisors ($M = 4.42, SD = 1.97$) was significant, $r(154) = .86, p < .001$. The correlation was positive with higher responses on perceptions

of preparedness for practicum supervision relating to higher responses on perceived preparation to accept guidance from supervisors.

Research Sub-Hypothesis 1.1.3

Research sub-hypothesis 1.1.3 stated: “There is a relationship between counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceived preparation to ask for assistance from supervisor(s).” This sub-hypothesis was supported as the correlation between counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision ($M = 4.45, SD = 1.67$) and perceived preparation to ask for assistance from supervisors ($M = 4.40, SD = 2.03$) was significant, $r(154) = .88, p < .001$. The correlation was positive with higher responses on perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision relating to higher responses on perceived preparation to ask for assistance from supervisors.

Research Sub-Hypothesis 1.1.4

Research sub-hypothesis 1.1.4 stated: “There is a relationship between counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceived preparation for what would be required in supervision.” This sub-hypothesis was supported as the correlation between counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision ($M = 4.45, SD = 1.67$) and perceived preparation for what would be required in supervision ($M = 4.40, SD = 1.69$) was significant, $r(154) = .91, p < .001$. The correlation was positive with higher responses on perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision relating to higher responses on perceived preparation for what would be required in supervision.

Research Hypothesis 1.2

Research hypothesis 1.2 stated: “There is a relationship between counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceptions of the accuracy of pre-practicum expectations for practicum supervision.” This hypothesis was supported as the relationship between counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceptions of the accuracy of pre-practicum expectations for practicum supervision was significant based upon significant results for each of the following three sub-hypotheses, 1.2.1, 1.2.2, and 1.2.3.

Research Sub-Hypothesis 1.2.1

Research sub-hypothesis 1.2.1 stated: “There is a relationship between counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceptions of the accuracy of pre-practicum expectations for what would be experienced in practicum supervision.” This sub-hypothesis was supported as the correlation between counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision ($M = 4.45$, $SD = 1.67$) and perceptions of the accuracy of pre-practicum expectations for what would be experienced in practicum supervision ($M = 4.22$, $SD = 1.62$) was significant, $r(154) = .80$, $p < .001$. The correlation was positive with higher responses on perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision relating to higher responses on perceptions of the accuracy of pre-practicum expectations for what would be experienced in practicum supervision.

Research Sub-Hypothesis 1.2.2

Research sub-hypothesis 1.2.2 stated: “There is a relationship between counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceptions

of the accuracy of pre-practicum expectations for what supervisors would provide to trainees.” This sub-hypothesis was supported as the correlation between counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision ($M = 4.45$, $SD = 1.67$) and perceptions of the accuracy of pre-practicum expectations for what supervisors would provide to trainees ($M = 4.35$, $SD = 1.59$) was significant, $r(154) = .81$, $p < .001$. The correlation was positive with higher responses on perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision relating to higher responses on perceptions of the accuracy of pre-practicum expectations for what supervisors would provide to trainees.

Research Sub-Hypothesis 1.2.3

Research sub-hypothesis 1.2.3 stated: “There is a relationship between counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceptions of the accuracy of pre-practicum expectations for what supervisors would require from trainees.” This sub-hypothesis was supported as the correlation between counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision ($M = 4.45$, $SD = 1.67$) and perceptions of the accuracy of pre-practicum expectations for what supervisors would require from trainees ($M = 4.30$, $SD = 1.59$) was significant, $r(154) = .80$, $p < .001$. The correlation was positive with higher responses on perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision relating to higher responses on perceptions of the accuracy of pre-practicum expectations for what supervisors would require from trainees.

Research Hypothesis 1.3

Research hypothesis 1.3 stated: “There is a relationship between counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceptions of preparation for practicum supervisory structure and process.” This hypothesis was

supported as the relationship between counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceptions of preparation for practicum supervisory structure and process was significant based upon significant results for each of the following seven sub-hypotheses, 1.3.1 through 1.3.7.

Research Sub-Hypothesis 1.3.1

Research sub-hypothesis 1.3.1 stated: "There is a relationship between counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceptions of preparation for how supervision sessions would be structured." This sub-hypothesis was supported as the correlation between counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision ($M = 4.45, SD = 1.67$) and perceptions of preparation for how supervision sessions would be structured ($M = 4.29, SD = 1.57$) was significant, $r(154) = .78, p < .001$. The correlation was positive with higher responses on perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision relating to higher responses on perceptions of preparation for how supervision sessions would be structured.

Research Sub-Hypothesis 1.3.2

Research sub-hypothesis 1.3.2 stated: "There is a relationship between counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and awareness that supervisors may approach supervision differently." This sub-hypothesis was supported as the correlation between counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision ($M = 4.45, SD = 1.67$) and awareness that supervisors may approach supervision differently ($M = 4.27, SD = 1.78$) was significant, $r(154) = .67, p < .001$. The correlation was positive with higher responses on perceptions

of preparedness for practicum supervision relating to higher responses on awareness that supervisors may approach supervision differently.

Research Sub-Hypothesis 1.3.3

Research sub-hypothesis 1.3.3 stated: “There is a relationship between counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceptions of preparation for what happens in individual supervision sessions.” This sub-hypothesis was supported as the correlation between counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision ($M = 4.45, SD = 1.67$) and perceptions of preparation for what happens in individual supervision sessions ($M = 4.39, SD = 1.67$) was significant, $r(154) = .60, p < .001$. The correlation was positive with higher responses on perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision relating to higher responses on perceptions of preparation for what happens in individual supervision sessions.

Research Sub-Hypothesis 1.3.4

Research sub-hypothesis 1.3.4 stated: “There is a relationship between counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceptions of preparation for what happens in group supervision sessions.” This sub-hypothesis was supported as the correlation between counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision ($M = 4.45, SD = 1.67$) and perceptions of preparation for what happens in group supervision sessions ($M = 4.29, SD = 1.70$) was significant, $r(154) = .65, p < .001$. The correlation was positive with higher responses on perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision relating to higher responses on perceptions of preparation for what happens in group supervision sessions.

Research Sub-Hypothesis 1.3.5

Research sub-hypothesis 1.3.5 stated: “There is a relationship between counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceptions of preparation for what happens in practicum site supervision sessions.” This sub-hypothesis was supported as the correlation between counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision ($M = 4.45, SD = 1.67$) and perceptions of preparation for what happens in practicum site supervision sessions ($M = 4.38, SD = 1.75$) was significant, $r(154) = .47, p < .001$. The correlation was positive with higher responses on perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision relating to higher responses on perceptions of preparation for what happens in practicum site supervision sessions.

Research Sub-Hypothesis 1.3.6

Research sub-hypothesis 1.3.6 stated: “There is a relationship between counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceptions of preparation for what happens in university supervision sessions.” This sub-hypothesis was supported as the correlation between counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision ($M = 4.45, SD = 1.67$) and perceptions of preparation for what happens in university supervision sessions ($M = 4.30, SD = 1.71$) was significant, $r(154) = .69, p < .001$. The correlation was positive with higher responses on perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision relating to higher responses on perceptions of preparation for what happens in university supervision sessions.

Research Sub-Hypothesis 1.3.7

Research sub-hypothesis 1.3.7 stated: “There is a relationship between counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceptions of preparation for addressing personal issues in supervision.” This sub-hypothesis was supported as the correlation between counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision ($M = 4.45$, $SD = 1.67$) and perceptions of preparation for addressing personal issues in supervision ($M = 4.33$, $SD = 1.70$) was significant, $r(154) = .70$, $p < .001$. The correlation was positive with higher responses on perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision relating to higher responses on perceptions of preparation for addressing personal issues in supervision.

Research Hypothesis 1.4

Research hypothesis 1.4 stated: “There is a relationship between counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and supervisory feedback.” This hypothesis was supported as the relationship between counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and supervisory feedback was significant based upon significant results for each of the following five sub-hypotheses, 1.4.1. through 1.4.5.

Research Sub-Hypothesis 1.4.1

Research sub-hypothesis 1.4.1 stated: “There is a relationship between counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceptions of preparation for receiving feedback from supervisors.” This sub-hypothesis was supported as the correlation between counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision ($M = 4.45$, $SD = 1.67$) and perceptions of

preparation for receiving feedback from supervisors ($M = 4.49, SD = 1.93$) was not significant, $r(154) = .84, p < .001$. The correlation was positive with higher responses on perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision relating to higher responses on perceptions of preparation for receiving feedback from supervisors.

Research Sub-Hypothesis 1.4.2

Research sub-hypothesis 1.4.2 stated: “There is a relationship between counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceptions of preparation for receiving feedback from other counselor trainees.” This sub-hypothesis was supported as the correlation between counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision ($M = 4.45, SD = 1.67$) and perceptions of preparation for receiving feedback from other counselor trainees ($M = 4.46, SD = 1.90$) was significant, $r(154) = .76, p < .001$. The correlation was positive with higher responses on perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision relating to higher responses on perceptions of preparation for receiving feedback from other counselor trainees.

Research Sub-Hypothesis 1.4.3

Research sub-hypothesis 1.4.3 stated: “There is a relationship between counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceptions of preparation for giving feedback to other counselor trainees.” This sub-hypothesis was supported as the correlation between counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision ($M = 4.45, SD = 1.67$) and perceptions of preparation for giving feedback to other counselor trainees ($M = 4.37, SD = 1.69$) was significant, $r(154) = .67, p < .001$. The correlation was positive with higher responses on

perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision relating to higher responses on perceptions of preparation for giving feedback to other counselor trainees.

Research Sub-Hypothesis 1.4.4

Research sub-hypothesis 1.4.4 stated: “There is a relationship between counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceptions of preparation for giving feedback to supervisors.” This sub-hypothesis was supported as the correlation between counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision ($M = 4.45, SD = 1.67$) and perceptions of preparation for giving feedback to supervisors ($M = 4.12, SD = 1.62$) was significant, $r(154) = .62, p < .001$. The correlation was positive with higher responses on perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision relating to higher responses on perceptions of preparation for giving feedback to supervisors.

Research Sub-Hypothesis 1.4.5

Research sub-hypothesis 1.4.5 stated: “There is a relationship between counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceptions of preparation for receiving feedback from supervisors as a result of feedback received during coursework.” This sub-hypothesis was supported as the correlation between counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision ($M = 4.45, SD = 1.67$) and perceptions of preparation for receiving feedback from supervisors as a result of feedback received during coursework ($M = 4.21, SD = 1.86$) was significant, $r(154) = .71, p < .001$. The correlation was positive with higher responses on perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision relating to higher responses on perceptions of

preparation for receiving feedback from supervisors as a result of feedback received during coursework.

Research Hypothesis 1.5

Research hypothesis 1.5 stated: “There is a relationship between counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceptions of evaluation in supervision.” This hypothesis was supported as the relationship between counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceptions of evaluation in supervision was significant based upon significant results for each of the following three sub-hypotheses, 1.5.1, 1.5.2, and 1.5.3.

Research Sub-Hypothesis 1.5.1

Research sub-hypothesis 1.5.1 stated: “There is a relationship between counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and awareness of the evaluation process.” This sub-hypothesis was supported as the correlation between counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision ($M = 4.45$, $SD = 1.67$) and awareness of the evaluation process ($M = 4.01$, $SD = 1.61$) was significant, $r(154) = .59$, $p < .001$. The correlation was positive with higher responses on perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision relating to higher responses on awareness of the evaluation process.

Research Sub-Hypothesis 1.5.2

Research sub-hypothesis 1.5.2 stated: “There is a relationship between counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceptions of the influence of evaluation on their supervisory experience.” This sub-hypothesis was supported as the correlation between counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of

preparedness for practicum supervision ($M = 4.45, SD = 1.67$) and perceptions of the influence of evaluation on their supervisory experience ($M = 4.12, SD = 1.91$) was significant, $r(154) = .47, p < .001$. The correlation was positive with higher responses on perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision relating to higher responses on perceptions of the influence of evaluation on their supervisory experience.

Research Sub-Hypothesis 1.5.3

Research sub-hypothesis 1.5.3 stated: “There is a relationship between counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and comfort in disclosing a lack of competence during individual supervision.” This sub-hypothesis was supported as the correlation between counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision ($M = 4.45, SD = 1.67$) and comfort in disclosing a lack of competence during individual supervision ($M = 4.12, SD = 1.80$) was significant, $r(154) = .70, p < .001$. The correlation was positive with higher responses on perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision relating to higher responses on comfort in disclosing a lack of competence during individual supervision.

Table 5

Summary of relationships of perceptions of preparedness to various aspects of supervision

Aspect of supervision	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>r</i> *	<i>r</i> ²
Overall perceptions of preparedness	4.45	1.67		
General practicum supervision and preparation:				
Knowledge accuracy of supervisory purpose	4.19	1.72	.78	.61
Preparation to accept supervisory guidance and support	4.42	1.97	.86	.74
Preparedness to ask for supervisory assistance	4.40	2.03	.88	.77
Preparation for the requirements of supervision	4.40	1.69	.91	.83
Practicum expectations:				
Accuracy of supervisory experience expectations	4.22	1.62	.80	.64
Accuracy of expectations of what supervisors would provide	4.35	1.59	.81	.66
Accuracy of expectations of what supervisors would require	4.30	1.59	.80	.64
Practicum supervision structure and sessions:				
Preparation for structure of supervision sessions	4.29	1.57	.78	.61
Awareness of different approaches to supervision	4.27	1.78	.67	.45
Preparation for what happens in individual supervision	4.39	1.67	.60	.36
Preparation for what happens in group supervision	4.29	1.70	.65	.42
Preparation for what happens in site supervision	4.38	1.75	.47	.22
Preparation for what happens in university supervision	4.30	1.71	.69	.48
Preparation to address personal issues during supervision	4.33	1.70	.70	.49

Table 5 continued

Summary of relationships of perceptions of preparedness to various aspects of supervision

Aspect of supervision	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>r</i> *	<i>r</i> ²
Overall perceptions of preparedness	4.45	1.67		
Practicum supervision feedback:				
Preparation for receiving feedback from supervisors	4.49	1.93	.84	.71
Preparation for receiving feedback from other trainees	4.46	1.90	.76	.58
Preparation for giving feedback to other trainees	4.37	1.69	.67	.45
Preparation for giving feedback to supervisors	4.12	1.62	.62	.38
Effect of coursework feedback on feedback preparation	4.21	1.86	.71	.50
Practicum supervision evaluation:				
Awareness of evaluation methods	4.01	1.61	.59	.35
Influence of evaluation on supervisory experience	4.12	1.91	.47	.22
Comfort level to disclose lack of competence	4.15	1.80	.70	.49

*All correlations were significant at the .001 level.

Research Sub-Question 2

Research sub-question 2 asked: “Is there a relationship between counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and prior concerns about being supervised?” This sub-question was answered by research hypothesis 2.1, the result of which did not support the hypothesis as discussed below.

Research Hypothesis 2.1

Research hypothesis 2.1 stated: “There is a relationship between counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and prior concerns about being supervised.” This hypothesis was not supported as the correlation between counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision ($M = 4.45$, $SD = 1.67$) and prior concerns about being supervised ($M = 3.88$, $SD = 1.87$) was not significant, $r(154) = -.12$, $p = .136$.

Research Sub-Question 3

Research sub-question 3 asked: “Is there a relationship between counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceptions of practicum supervision experience to date?” This sub-question was answered by research hypothesis 3.1, the result of which supported the hypothesis as discussed below.

Research Hypothesis 3.1

Research hypothesis 3.1 stated: “There is a relationship between counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceptions of practicum supervision experience to date.” This hypothesis was supported as the correlation between counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision ($M = 4.45$, $SD = 1.67$) and perceptions of practicum supervision experience to date ($M = 4.42$, $SD = 2.03$) was significant, $r(154) = .82$, $p < .001$. The correlation was positive with higher responses on perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision relating to higher responses on perceptions of practicum supervision experience to date.

Research Sub-Question 4

Research sub-question 4 asked: “Is there a relationship between counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and comfort experienced with receiving feedback in supervision?” This sub-question was answered by research hypothesis 4.1, the result of which supported the hypothesis as discussed below.

Research Hypothesis 4.1

Research hypothesis 4.1 stated: “There is a relationship between counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and comfort experienced with receiving feedback in supervision.” This hypothesis was supported as the correlation between counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision ($M = 4.45, SD = 1.67$) and comfort experienced with receiving feedback in supervision ($M = 4.43, SD = 1.93$) was significant, $r(154) = .81, p < .001$. The correlation was positive with higher responses on perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision relating to higher responses on comfort experienced with receiving feedback in supervision.

Research Sub-Question 5

Research sub-question 5 asked: “To what extent do counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision vary according to whether their academic program has a doctoral program of study, type of practicum site, type of supervisors, and hours per week in supervision?” This sub-question was answered by research hypotheses 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, and 5.4. The results of these hypotheses are discussed below and summarized in Table 9 following the discussion.

Research Hypothesis 5.1

Research hypothesis 5.1 stated: “There are differences in counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision based on being in an academic counseling program that has a counseling doctoral program of study.” This hypothesis was supported as the results were significant, $t(154) = 2.65, p=.01$. Students enrolled in a Master’s counseling program with a counseling doctoral program of study ($M = 4.74, SD = 1.60$) did have significantly different perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision than students enrolled in a program that did not have a doctoral program ($M = 4.03, SD = 1.69$).

Research Hypothesis 5.2

Research hypothesis 5.2 stated: “There are differences in counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision based on type of practicum site.” This hypothesis was tested using a one-way analysis of variance. The independent factor, type of practicum site, included four levels: field-based ($M = 4.37, SD = 1.55$), not directly owned or administered through respondent’s counseling academic program; lab-based ($M = 4.67, SD = 1.37$), or field site that is directly owned or administered through respondent’s counseling academic program at which “real” clients are counseled; classroom setting ($M = 4.33, SD = 2.35$), or lab-based that is directly owned or administered through respondent’s counseling academic program at which role-playing clients or students in the counseling academic program are “counseled”; and, other types of sites not listed ($M = 2.50, SD = .71$). The dependent variable was the counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision. These results are summarized in Table 6 and discussed below.

Table 6

ANOVA results for perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and type of practicum site

	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>es</i>
Between groups	11.08	3	3.69	1.32	.27	.03
Within groups	421.51	152	2.77			
Total	432.59	155				

This hypothesis was not supported as the ANOVA was not significant, $F(3,152) = 1.32, p = 2.66$. Participants at one type of practicum site did not report significantly different perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision than participants at any other type of site, although participants at lab-based sites did report higher perceptions of preparedness than those at other type of practicum sites.

Research Hypothesis 5.3

Research hypothesis 5.3 stated: “There are differences in counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision based on types of supervisors.” This hypothesis was not supported as there were no differences in counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision based on types of supervisors as concluded from the results of the following four sub-hypotheses, 5.3.1 through 5.3.4. These results are summarized in Table 7 and discussed below.

Table 7

ANOVA results for perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and type of supervisor

	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>es</i>
Individual site supervisor:						
Between groups	11.77	3	3.93	1.42	.24	.03
Within groups	385.35	139	2.77			
Total	397.12	142				
Group site supervisor:						
Between groups	16.23	3	5.41	1.76	.16	.06
Within groups	255.28	83	3.08			
Total	271.52	86				
Individual university supervisor:						
Between groups	18.48	2	9.24	3.59	.03	.05
Within groups	361.06	140	2.58			
Total	379.54	142				
Group university supervisor:						
Between groups	26.03	2	13.02	4.94	.00	.07
Within groups	374.21	142	2.64			
Total	400.24	144				

Research Sub-Hypothesis 5.3.1

Research sub-hypothesis 5.3.1 stated: “There are differences in counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision based on type of individual site supervisor.” This sub-hypothesis was tested using a one-way analysis of variance. The independent factor, type of individual site supervisor, included four levels: employed by the practicum site ($M = 4.47$, $SD = 1.65$), full-time faculty ($M = 4.21$, $SD = 1.73$), part-time or adjunct faculty ($M = 5.50$, $SD = .53$), and doctoral student ($M = 4.46$, $SD = 1.77$). The dependent variable was the counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision. This sub-hypothesis was not supported, $F(3,139) = 1.42$, $p = .24$. Participants with one type of individual site supervisor did not report significantly different perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision than participants with any other type of individual site supervisor.

Research Sub-Hypothesis 5.3.2

Research sub-hypothesis 5.3.2 stated: “There are differences in counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision based on type of group site supervisor.” This sub-hypothesis was tested using a one-way analysis of variance. The independent factor, type of group site supervisor, included four levels: employed by the practicum site ($M = 4.68$, $SD = 1.92$), full-time faculty ($M = 4.29$, $SD = 1.84$), part-time or adjunct faculty ($M = 5.21$, $SD = 1.19$), and doctoral student ($M = 3.75$, $SD = 1.71$). The dependent variable was the counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision. This sub-hypothesis was not supported as the ANOVA was not significant, $F(3,83) = 1.76$, $p = .16$. Participants with one type of group

site supervisor did not report significantly different perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision than participants with any other type of group site supervisor.

Research Sub-Hypothesis 5.3.3

Research sub-hypothesis 5.3.3 stated: “There are differences in counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision based on type of individual university supervisor.” This sub-hypothesis was tested using a one-way analysis of variance. The independent factor, type of individual university supervisor, included three levels: full-time faculty ($M = 4.34$, $SD = 1.71$), part-time or adjunct faculty ($M = 5.36$, $SD = 1.09$), and doctoral student ($M = 4.51$, $SD = 1.60$). The dependent variable was the counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision.

This sub-hypothesis was supported as the ANOVA was significant, $F(2,140) = 3.59$, $p = .03$. Tukey HSD post hoc tests were conducted to evaluate pairwise differences among the means, and calculated a significant difference in the means of the full-time and part-time faculty supervisors. Participants with a part-time or adjunct faculty individual university supervisor ($M = 5.36$, $SD = 1.09$) reported significantly higher perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision than did students with a full-time faculty supervisor ($M = 4.34$, $SD = 1.71$). No other significant differences in the means comparing other pairs of individual university supervisors were calculated.

Research Sub-Hypothesis 5.3.4

Research sub-hypothesis 5.3.4 stated: “There are differences in counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision based on type of group university supervisor.” This sub-hypothesis was tested using a one-way analysis of

variance. The independent factor, type of group university supervisor, included three levels: full-time faculty ($M = 4.27, SD = 1.74$), part-time or adjunct faculty ($M = 5.34, SD = 1.04$), and doctoral student ($M = 4.42, SD = 1.74$). The dependent variable was the counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision.

This sub-hypothesis was supported as the ANOVA was significant, $F(2,142) = 4.94, p = .00$. Tukey HSD post hoc tests were conducted to evaluate pairwise differences among the means, and calculated a significant difference in the means of the full-time and part-time faculty supervisors. Participants with a part-time or adjunct faculty group university supervisor ($M = 5.34, SD = 1.04$) reported significantly higher perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision than did students with a full-time faculty supervisor ($M = 4.27, SD = 1.74$). No other significant differences in the means comparing other pairs of group university supervisors were calculated.

Research Hypothesis 5.4

Research hypothesis 5.4 stated: "There is a relationship between counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and total hours of supervision per week." This hypothesis was not supported as the correlation between counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision ($M = 4.45, SD = 1.67$) and total hours of supervision per week ($M = 3.59, SD = 1.08$) was not significant, $r(154) = .17, p = .030$.

Table 9

Summary of results for perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and academic program, practicum site, and supervision factors

	Results	<i>p</i>
Influence on overall perceptions of preparedness:		
Academic program had counseling doctoral program	$t = 2.65$.01*
Type of practicum site	$F = 1.33$.27
Type of individual site supervisor	$F = 1.42$.24
Type of group site supervisor	$F = 1.76$.16
Type of individual university supervisor	$F = 3.58$.03*
Type of group university supervisor	$F = 4.94$.00*
Relationship of overall perceptions of preparedness to the number of supervision hours per week	$r = .17$.03

*Significant results.

Research Sub-Question 6

Research sub-question 6 stated: “To what extent do counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision vary according to formal supervision preparation received prior to beginning practicum?” This sub-question was answered by research hypothesis 6.1, the result of which did not support the hypothesis as discussed below.

Research Hypothesis 6.1

Research hypothesis 6.1 stated: “There are differences in counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision based on type of formal supervision preparation received prior to beginning practicum.” This hypothesis was tested using a one-way analysis of variance. The independent factor, type of formal supervision preparation received prior to beginning practicum, included four levels: supervision course ($M = 4.73, SD = 1.91$), workshop or seminar ($M = 3.86, SD = 1.35$), presentation pre-practicum ($M = 4.57, SD = 1.92$), and no formal supervision ($M = 4.36, SD = 1.39$) preparation. The dependent variable was the counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision. This hypothesis was rejected as the ANOVA was not significant as p was greater than .05, $F(3,152) = .64, p = .59$. Participants with one type of formal supervision preparation did not report significantly different perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision than participants with any other type of formal supervision preparation. These results are summarized in Table 10 below.

Table 10

ANOVA results for perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and type of formal supervision preparation received prior to beginning practicum

	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>es</i>
Between groups	5.42	3	1.81	.64	.59	.01
Within groups	427.17	152	2.81			
Total	432.59	155				

Summary

This chapter provided the results of this research study. Significant results were revealed in the relationship between counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and: (a) perceived preparation for various aspects of supervision; (b) perceptions of practicum supervision experience to date; (c) comfort experienced with receiving feedback in supervision; and, (d) type of university supervisors. These results will be discussed in Chapter Five.

Research sub-question 1 found there were significant positive relationships between counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and various aspects of supervision. A significant positive relationship between counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceptions of practicum supervision experiences to date was found by research sub-question 3. Also, research sub-question 4 found a significant positive relationship between counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and comfort experienced with receiving feedback in supervision.

Research sub-question 5 found there were significant differences in counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision based upon students being enrolled in an academic counseling program that has a counseling doctoral program of study, and differences based upon the trainees' type of university practicum supervisors. The type of practicum site supervisors did not have a significant effect upon counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision, nor did the type of practicum site. Also, no significant relationship was found between counselor

trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and total hours of supervision per week.

Research sub-question 2 found there was no significant relationship between counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and prior concerns about being supervised. Research sub-question 6 found that the type of formal supervision preparation received prior to beginning practicum did not significantly effect counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

This chapter presents a summary of the findings of this research study and a discussion of these findings. Limitations and delimitations of this study are also included in this chapter. Implications of this study's findings for counselor educators and supervisors are provided, and recommendations for future research are offered.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate counselor trainees' perceptions of their preparedness for practicum supervision. Specifically, this study examined counselor trainees' perceptions of how prepared they believed they were for individual and group supervisory experiences associated with practicum, the initial clinical experience of counseling students.

Discussion of Findings

One of the requirements for a student earning a master's degree in the field of professional counseling is to complete supervised clinical experience. The initial phase of supervised clinical experience is typically referred to as practicum and the final phase(s) as internship. In most states, supervised clinical experience continues post-master's as

state licensure governing entities require additional supervised internship experience prior to application for licensure as a professional counselor. As a result, unlicensed counselors gain extensive clinical experience as supervised counselor trainees with one or more supervisors overseeing their work and assisting in their development as professional counselors.

To prepare counseling students for practicum and internship, CACREP (Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs, n.d.) Standards require successful completion of specific core academic courses prior to beginning practicum. These core courses are designed to provide foundational knowledge and skills for clinical work with diverse client populations and issues, client assessment, and ethical guidelines for the counseling professional. In addition, students also must complete courses specific to their chosen area of counseling specialty; for instance, school counseling students must complete coursework in school counseling and for working with children and adolescents.

After completion of the core and specialty coursework, counseling students are eligible to begin practicum at a clinical location where they will work directly with clients. Bernard and Goodyear (2004) noted that during practicum and continuing through internship, counseling students transition to their new roles as professional counselor trainees. Experienced mental health professionals assist with this transition by providing counselor trainees with guidance, support, and resources in supervision.

As there are no standards defined by which to prepare students for supervision, it is unknown whether counseling programs are addressing the supervisory process through some form of pre-practicum supervision training or by infusing components of

supervision in pre-practicum core courses. Without pre-practicum exposure to supervision, counseling students may enter the unknown realm of counseling supervision unprepared to fully experience the developmental process of supervision, or with misconceptions of the counseling supervisory relationship and supervisory process that may impede growth as a professional counselor. With the addition of the unfamiliar nature of supervisory evaluation, counselor trainees' anxiety and fears about the supervisory process increase as they enter practicum and their initial therapeutic work with real clients (Sweitzer & King, 2004).

This exploratory research study investigated perceptions of practicum counselor trainees to help understand how prepared they believe they were for supervision. Based upon common elements of various developmental models of supervision (Loganbill, Hardy, & Delworth, 1982; Rønnestad & Skovholt, 1993; Stoltenberg, 1993), this study examined counselor trainees' perceptions of their preparedness for practicum supervision based upon: (a) expectations of supervision; (b) understanding of the structure and formats used in supervision; (c) receptivity to and use of feedback in supervision; and (d) the evaluative component of supervision. This study also investigated possible explanations as to what factors may lead counselor trainees to feel more or less prepared for practicum supervision.

The general research question for this study asked, "What are counselor trainees' perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision?" To answer this question, six research sub-questions were explored. Using a survey instrument developed specifically for this study, Counselor Trainee Preparedness Perceptions Survey - Practicum Supervision (CTPPS-PS), variables of interest were compared to the survey question,

“Overall, how prepared do you believe you were for supervision?” Possible explanations as to factors influencing overall perceptions on preparedness were derived from comparing this question to academic, practicum experience, and practicum supervision demographic data.

Before discussing the findings for each of the research sub-questions, some general observations are offered to understand the data presented in this chapter. In response to the question on overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision, the mean response was 4.19 ($SD = 1.72$) on a 7-point scale of one to seven. For individual survey questions relating to perceptions of preparedness for different aspects of supervision, mean responses ranged from 4.01 to 4.49 with a large standard deviation ranging from 1.61 to 1.93. Thus, on the average, counselor trainees in the beginning stage of their practicum responded with very neutral values to perceptions on preparedness for supervision, although the large standard deviation represents high variation in responses. The importance of these neutral values is that counselor trainees enter practicum feeling equally prepared as they do unprepared for the required supervisory process integral in their development as professional counselors. As supervision is an important part of the development of counselor trainees (Bernard & Goodyear, 2004; Sweitzer & King, 2004; Watkins, 1997), preparing students for the supervisory process better equips them to be supervised and embrace supervision as a learning experience. These findings indicate that while some trainees believe they were prepared for supervision, on the average counselor trainees did not think they were prepared for practicum supervision thus possibly impacting this important learning experience in their professional development.

Discussion of Findings for Research Sub-Question 1

Research sub-question 1 investigated if there is a relationship between counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceived preparation for various aspects of supervision. To answer this question, aspects of supervision were grouped into five areas and a hypothesis of significant relationship to overall perceptions of preparedness was tested for each grouping. The five supervision aspects groupings were: (a) general preparation for supervision; (b) accuracy of expectations; (c) practicum supervisory structure and process; (d) supervisory feedback; and, (e) supervisory evaluation.

In a research study examining the effect of pre-supervision preparation on master's level counselor trainees, McGraw (1996) found that students who had observed a supervision preparation videotape had significant negative correlations between ratings of role ambiguity, role conflict, and ratings of overall performance. Strong positive relationships ranging from $r = .78$ to $r = .91$ were found between counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceived general preparation for supervision. These findings indicate this study's participants believed advanced preparation for supervision through general knowledge of the purpose of supervision and its processes resulted in higher perceptions of preparedness. Supporting the results of McGraw's study which suggested that by offering methods exposing pre-practicum students to some of the processes in supervision, these findings imply that new counselor trainees may be better equipped to participate in supervision with some advance knowledge of what will happen in supervision and have clearer understanding of roles in the supervisory process.

Bernard and Goodyear (2004) noted that supervision overlaps teaching, counseling, and consultation as strategies to assist developing counselors. Strong positive relationships were found between overall perceptions of preparedness and perceived prior knowledge of the purpose of supervision ($r = .78$), preparation to accept guidance and support from supervisors ($r = .86$), preparation to ask for assistance from supervisors ($r = .88$), and perceived preparation for what would be required in supervision ($r = .91$). These findings suggest that by understanding the purpose of supervision, how supervision supports professional growth, and being prepared for the requirements of supervision, counselor trainees can begin practicum supervision prepared to embrace the teaching, counseling, and consultation strategies Bernard and Goodyear noted supervisors employ to assist developing counselors.

Yontef (1997) noted that once trainees have developed clarity in their responsibilities within the supervision process, they can avoid assumptions or unrealistic expectations about supervision and their focus can gravitate toward continued education and developing autonomy as a professional counselor. Research sub-question 1 found strong positive relationships between counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceptions of the accuracy of pre-practicum expectations for practicum supervision, $r = .80$ to $r = .81$. These findings support Sweitzer and King's (2004) writings on the importance of role-induction for counselor trainees to help provide accurate expectations of roles in supervision. Without supervisory role-induction, counselor trainees may enter practicum supervision with misconceptions about supervisory roles that can result in delaying the learning process until these roles are redefined. These misconceptions may be based upon past supervisory

experiences and compounded by a lack of accurate information. Thus by clarifying supervisory roles and responsibilities, trainees can focus on further acquisition of knowledge and development as a professional counselor.

Bernard and Goodyear (2004) cited an abundance of literature on different supervision models driving theoretical approaches to the structure of supervision and supervisory style. Research sub-question 1 investigated the relationship between counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceptions of preparation for practicum supervisory structure and process. Again, positive relationships ranging from $r = .47$ to $r = .78$ were found between perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and for practicum supervisory structure and process. The relationship to perceptions of preparation for practicum supervision structure was stronger ($r = .78$) than was the relationship to awareness of different approaches to supervision ($r = .67$). These findings indicate that counselor trainees who reported high levels of preparedness also reported a high level of understanding about supervisory structure, but did not report as high an understanding of how their supervisors would approach supervision. A suggested pre-practicum preparation strategy based upon these findings is to incorporate basics of supervisory structure and into class structure to offer students more insight into and preparation for supervision.

Although the relationship to perceptions of preparation for practicum supervision structure was strong, the relationship was weaker between overall perceptions of preparedness and specific types of supervision. The relationship of overall perceptions of preparedness to perceptions of preparation for university supervision was $r = .69$ as compared to $r = .47$ for site supervision. This finding indicates students feel more

prepared for university supervision, and is supported by the influence of familiarity on comfort levels, as the university environment is more familiar to students than their practicum site. These findings are also supported by data analyzed for research sub-question 5 in which perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision were highest for counselor trainees at a lab-based practicum site that is directly owned or administered through the student's academic program than for any other type of practicum site.

To assist in counselor development, professors may engage students in class discussions and require written assignments to encourage exploration of personal values and develop self-awareness critical to effective counseling relationships. Personal issues often arise as counselor trainees begin to work with clients, and these issues are addressed in supervision. Sweitzer and King (2004) noted that trainees often have contradictory emotions associated with discussing personal issues in supervision, realizing that these discussions will assist professional growth but may be difficult as "we do not always want to see ourselves clearly or change our ways of doing things" (p. 122). Research sub-question 1 investigated the relationship between counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceptions of preparation for addressing personal issues in supervision, finding a strong positive relationship ($r = .70$). These findings imply that with more preparation for supervision, trainees are better prepared to balance the contradictory emotions of addressing personal issues to enhance their professional growth as noted by Sweitzer and King.

According to Hahn and Molnar (1991), feedback is a primary activity in clinical supervision. Bernard and Goodyear (2004) cited numerous references to the importance of the use of interactional feedback as "ongoing and constant between the supervisor and

[counselor trainee]” (p. 31) forming the basis for the majority of communication that occurs in supervision. Positive relationships were found between counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and supervisory feedback received and given to supervisors and other trainees. These findings suggest that preparation for feedback will provide trainees with a foundation for the majority of communication that occurs in supervision.

On the CTPPS-PS, feedback was defined as “positive, negative, and corrective feedback provided to encourage learning, self-reflection, and growth while protecting clients’ rights to obtain quality counseling services.” Supported by Stoltenberg’s (1993) writings that new counselor trainees developmentally need positive feedback and little direct confrontation with their supervisors and co-workers, the relationship of overall preparedness for practicum supervision to receiving supervisory feedback was stronger than to giving feedback. Specifically, the relationship of overall preparation to receiving feedback from supervisors was $r = .84$ and $r = .76$ from other trainees, versus the relationship to feedback given to supervisors of $r = .62$ and to other trainees of $r = .67$. These findings indicate that trainees’ beliefs relating to preparation to receive supervisory feedback correlated higher to overall perceptions of preparedness than did perceptions on preparedness for offering feedback to others. These findings can be linked to the relationship between counselor trainees’ overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceptions of preparation for receiving feedback from supervisors as a result of feedback received during coursework. The positive relationship found ($r = .71$) supports Sweitzer and King’s (2004) writings that counselor trainees might benefit from sufficient corrective feedback in their coursework to reduce their

potential frustration in receiving feedback offered in supervision, and to possibly appreciate the learning benefits of receiving corrective feedback.

Through an on-going process of evaluation and intentional feedback, counselor trainees experience professional and personal growth through supervisory evaluation (Yontef, 1997). Although the process of evaluation in supervision is one of the lesser-defined and structured aspects of supervision (Bernard & Goodyear, 2004), evaluation is a reflective process intended to gauge progress and promote future development (Goodyear & Nelson, 1997). Research sub-question 1 found a positive relationship between counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceptions of evaluation in supervision. However, collectively these relationships represent the weakest of the correlations found (ranging from $r = .47$ to $.70$) in response to research sub-question 1's investigation into the relationship of overall perceptions of preparedness to various aspects of supervision. Numerous respondents commented on anxiety related to supervisory evaluation. Even though the reflective nature of evaluation is an important aspect of supervision and counselor development (Bernard & Goodyear; Goodyear & Nelson), the implication of these findings and respondents' comments is that preparation for supervisory evaluation does not appear to occur as prominently as preparation for other aspects of practicum supervision. In tandem with coursework feedback to prepare students for supervisory feedback, offering frequent informal evaluation of knowledge and skills during coursework may help prepare students for supervisory evaluation.

Bernard and Goodyear (2004) stressed that some form of evaluation should be conducted throughout supervision, although counselor trainees are often very anxious

about their first formal evaluative process that occurs at the end of their practicum semester. Bernard and Goodyear's writings are supported by the relationships found in this study between overall perceptions of preparation to awareness of the evaluation process ($r = .59$) and to the influence of evaluation on supervisory experience ($r = .47$). These findings indicate that although prepared counselor trainees are somewhat more aware of the evaluation process, they believe this process has an influence upon their experiences in supervision. Likewise, the strong positive relationship of overall preparedness to comfort in disclosing lack of competence ($r = .70$) supports Sweitzer and King's (2004) writings that counselor trainees have concerns that they will not be viewed as competent in their new role as a counseling professional. As trainees may have concerns that disclosing a lack of competence will result in their appearing incompetent, professors can encourage use of techniques such as Interpersonal Process Recall (Riggs, 1979) to help students understand that through such disclosures in supervision come opportunities to learn.

Discussion of Findings for Research Sub-Question 2

Research sub-question 2 investigated if there is a relationship between counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and prior concerns about being supervised. Although it was hypothesized that a significant relationship would exist and that higher overall perceptions of preparedness would correlate with lower concerns, the results did not find such a significant relationship ($r = -.12$). This finding was contrary to what was expected as prepared trainees were as concerned with being supervised as were those not prepared. This may be explained by Sweitzer and King's (2004) writings that counselor trainees have a need to be accepted

by their supervisors and co-workers, and have concerns that they will not be viewed as competent in their new role as a counseling professional. From these results, it appears that pre-practicum preparation for supervision does not have an impact upon future counselor trainees' willingness to begin receiving supervision in practicum. This finding supports those of Worthington and Roehlke (1979) that counselor trainees want to be taught how to counsel and to be provided with ways to conceptualize cases and to approach their clients' issues. These findings are supported by Leddick and Dye's (1987) research that counselor trainees expect effective supervision will include more corrective feedback in the beginning of their clinical experience.

Discussion of Findings for Research Sub-Question 3

Research sub-question 3 investigated the relationship between counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceptions of practicum supervision experience to date. The finding supported the hypothesis that a significant relationship exists between perceptions of preparedness and experience to date ($r = .82$). This finding indicates higher levels of preparedness correlate to more positive supervisory experiences for developing counselor trainees. This strong positive correlation was affirmed by comments from the survey respondents, with positive correlations to level of supervisory support and prior counseling relationships.

Two implications arise from research sub-question 3's findings and comments made by survey respondents. First, higher levels of supervisory support may result in higher levels of preparedness perceptions. Of interest was the comment of one respondent, "I would have answered many questions on this survey differently [lower] had I completed it before getting to know how much my supervisors would offer to me."

The implication in this comment is that the support of supervisors may help trainees overcome feelings of not being prepared.

Second, many of the survey respondents commented on the influence of prior counseling experiences and the resulting positive effect these experiences had on their perceptions of preparedness for supervision. These prior experiences included personal counseling, entered into voluntarily or as a requirement of their counseling academic program, and professional experiences working in or in tandem with mental health agencies. The implication from these comments is that trainees may feel more prepared for supervision if they have prior experiences with counseling relationships as these experiences may help clarify assumptions about the counseling process and expectations of themselves as counselors.

Discussion of Findings for Research Sub-Question 4

Research sub-question 4 explored the relationship between counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and comfort experienced with receiving feedback in supervision. The findings indicate a strong positive relationship of $r = .81$ between preparedness perceptions and comfort level receiving feedback, indicating counselor trainees are more comfortable with receiving feedback if they are more prepared for supervision. This finding provides support for interventions such as the Interpersonal Process Recall (Riggs, 1979), which can be used in coursework to prepare students for supervisory feedback by fostering students to reflect upon what did and did not work in role-play counseling sessions. Such interventions can have a significant impact on receptivity of counselor trainees to supervisory feedback (Ryan, Brutus, Greguras, & Hakel, 2000).

Discussion of Findings for Research Sub-Question 5

Research sub-question 5 investigated to what extent counselor trainees' perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision vary according to whether their academic program has a doctoral program of study, the type of practicum site, the type of supervisors, and hours per week in supervision. This sub-question was answered by four hypotheses, two of which, doctoral program of study and type of university supervisor, had significant results.

As CACREP standards for doctoral counseling programs include preparing students to be counselor educators and supervisors, these programs involve doctoral students in teaching master's level classes and in the supervision of master's level counselor trainees. Through pedagogical contact with doctoral students, future counselor trainees benefit from doctoral students' clinical experiences and knowledge, augmenting experiences and knowledge of faculty. Doctoral students often become mentors for master's students, providing additional learning and advisory opportunities for master's students and modeling supervisory process and relationships. This study found there was a significant difference in counselor trainees' perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision based on being in an academic counseling program that has a counseling doctoral program of study. Students enrolled in a master's counseling program with a counseling doctoral program of study ($M = 4.74$, $SD = 1.60$) had higher perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision than did students enrolled in a program that did not have a doctoral program ($M = 4.03$, $SD = 1.69$). These findings suggest that doctoral student contact with master's students improves preparation for practicum supervision. However, not all counselor trainees attend academic programs with a doctoral program of

study and as a result doctoral student contact may not be available. Master's only programs can investigate other supervision preparation methods such as involving more field-experienced trainees in teaching classes and classroom discussions on supervision.

Of the four types of practicum sites included in this study, the highest mean response to counselor trainees' perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision was reported by trainees at lab-based sites counseling real clients ($M = 4.67, SD = 1.37$), followed by field-based sites ($M = 4.37, SD = 1.55$). Due to students' familiarity with their counseling faculty and program administration, it was logical to expect respondents to report more favorably to perceptions of preparedness for lab-based practicum sites than for other sites. However, this difference was not significant nor was the difference between any pair of sites compared.

Differences in counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision varied based on types of supervisors, and consistently trainees reported higher perceptions of preparedness when supervised by a part-time or adjunct faculty member. The next highest perception of preparedness for practicum site supervision reported by trainees was for supervisors employed by field sites, and for doctoral students supervisors for university supervision. There were significant differences between perceptions of preparedness for trainees having part-time faculty university supervisors ($M = 5.36, SD = 1.09$ for individual supervisors, and $M = 5.34, SD = 1.04$ for group supervisors) and full-time university supervisors, ($M = 4.34, SD = 1.71$ for individual supervisors, and $M = 4.27, SD = 1.74$ for group supervisors). The findings are supported by comments from respondents, including a preference for the clinical experience part-time faculty and supervisors employed by field sites bring to supervision

as well as a less structured approach to supervisory process. Counselor trainees may also feel more professionally connected with supervisors who are still working with clients; even though a full-time professor may have clients, a student may not view a professor as primarily a practicing counselor. Supervisory relationships including full-time faculty supervisors and may be too influenced by prior student-professor classroom relationships for students to accept the shift to more individual student-focused supervisory relationships. Also, students may perceive that part-time faculty and supervisors employed by field sites have less power over student evaluation and resulting academic grades than do full-time faculty supervisors, thus possibly influencing trainees' comfort level within the supervisory relationship, perceptions of performance, and overall perceptions of practicum experiences.

Research sub-question 5 also investigated the relationship between counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and total hours of supervision per week. Counselor trainees in this study averaged 3.59 hours of supervision per week ($SD = 1.67$). The hypothesis that there would be a significant correlation was rejected because the relationship between perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and total hours of weekly supervision was not significant ($r = .17$). The basis for this hypothesis was that the more hours trainees experienced supervision per week, the more likely they would report higher beliefs of supervision preparedness as they would have had more experiences to help normalize feeling unprepared. However, this finding suggests that perceptions of preparedness are not influenced by the number of hours counselor trainees are supervised each week, and thus more supervisory experience may not help mitigate feelings of low levels of supervision preparedness.

Discussion of Findings for Research Sub-Question 6

Research sub-question 6 explored to what extent counselor trainees' perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision varies according to formal supervision preparation received prior to beginning practicum. Counselor trainees were asked to select whether they had attended a supervision course, a supervision workshop or seminar, a pre-practicum presentation, or had no formal supervision preparation. Contrary to what was hypothesized, there was no significant difference in perceptions of preparedness based upon type of formal supervision preparation received. Although attending a supervision course resulted in the highest average ($M = 4.73$, $SD = 1.91$), the lowest average was for attending a supervision workshop or seminar ($M = 3.86$, $SD = 1.35$). Also, having no formal supervision resulted in the second highest average perceptions of preparedness ($M = 4.36$, $SD = 1.49$), or less than half a point different than for trainees who had attended a supervision course, indicating that formal training has little effect upon preparedness for supervision.

Limitations and Delimitations

Creswell (2002) defined limitations as “potential weaknesses with the study that are identified by the researcher ... and help readers judge to what extent the findings can or cannot be generalized to other people and situations” (p. 253). A delimitation was defined by Wong (2002) as a boundary that helps provide a clear focus for research. As applied to a research study, a limitation is something that affects both the internal and external validity of the results of the study, and a delimitation is a restriction of these results.

This research study has five limitations known to the researcher. The first limitation involved unaccounted for factors that might have influenced which counselor trainees voluntarily completed the study's survey. As more universities with doctoral programs agreed to participate than did masters-only programs, a known unaccounted for factor was the self-selection of research supporting gatekeepers.

Another limitation was based upon administering the survey electronically on the Internet; as Internet access and comfort with use of computers was required in order to complete the survey, this method of instrument administration might have limited respondents and excluded data from possible respondents.

The third limitation of this research study was based upon development of an instrument for data collection. The instrument used in this research study did not have the benefit of experience beyond pilot testing to verify validity and reliability. Another known limitation of this research study was the effects upon the validity of results by quality and consistency of practicum supervision being received by the sample participants. Counselor trainees experiencing lower quality or less consistent supervision might have different perceptions of preparedness for supervision than would trainees experiencing higher quality or more consistent supervision.

Last, this study was limited by the generalizability of the selected sample to the population from which it was selected. Counselor trainees at CACREP universities may not be representative of all counselor trainees and thus this study's results may be restricted to trainees in CACREP-accredited programs. Also, in an attempt to have equal numbers of participants from programs with and without a doctoral program of study, a disproportionate number of master's level trainees from programs having doctoral

programs of study were included in this study than what is represented by all CACREP-accredited programs.

Due to differences in academic training and supervision requirements based upon profession, this research study is delimited to findings for counselor trainees in the profession of counseling and therefore cannot be applied to other mental health professions. Findings are also delimited to counselor trainees in the middle of their practicum semester, the results of which cannot be implied for counselor trainees in earlier or later stages of their clinical experience.

Implications for Counselor Educators and Supervisors

This research study was designed to learn more about counselor trainees' perceptions of their preparation for practicum supervision, and to identify which aspects of supervision should be addressed through pre-practicum preparation. The results of this study provide a foundation upon which counselor educators can design and implement pre-practicum supervision interventions to prepare counselor trainees for supervision and thus enhance counselor development. The results of this study also provide practicum supervisors with insight into expectations and aspects of supervision that can be addressed early in the supervisory process to help reduce anxiety and discomfort with supervision.

Hackney (1971) noted the importance of providing a transitional experiential period guiding counseling students from the academic classroom to counselor trainees at an internship site, and that such a transition is often overlooked in counselor education. Based upon the results of this study, formal supervision training does not appear to have a

significant correlation to overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision. However, being prepared for individual aspects of supervision does have significant relationships to overall perceptions of preparedness. Therefore, by preparing students for individual aspects of supervision, counselor educators are ultimately preparing students for the collective process of academic training and initial supervised field experience.

Possibly the most important finding of this study for counselor educators and supervisors is found in a brief analysis of average responses to questions on perceptions of practicum supervision preparedness. On a 7-point scale, counselor trainees' average response ranged from 4.01 to 4.49 meaning, on the average, counselor trainees enter practicum feeling equally prepared as they do unprepared for supervision received during field experience, identified by Bernard and Goodyear (2004) as the most critical developmental stages for professional counselors. When coupled with a mean response of 4.42 on perceptions of practicum supervision experience to date and a strong positive relationship ($r = .82$) between overall perceptions of preparation for practicum supervision and experience to date, these very neutral responses may indicate that the supportive learning environment of supervised field experience is being compromised by lack of preparation for practicum supervision.

To prepare students for practicum supervision, counselor educators can employ techniques to: (a) prepare students for what to expect in supervision, through class discussions and modeling of supervisory behaviors during interactions with students; (b) provide an understanding of, and model in classes, the structure of the different types of supervision, supervisory styles, and supervision formats; (c) prepare students for supervisory feedback through class interventions such as the Interpersonal Process Recall

(Riggs, 1979); and, (d) relate the purpose and process of evaluation in supervision through inclusion of supervisory evaluation methods as on-going evaluation of student coursework.

Through supervisor-training courses, counselor educators can help prepare future supervisors to openly discuss aspects of supervision at the onset of practicum. In addition to helping build solid foundation for new supervisory relationships, these initial supervisory discussions may address counselor trainees' concerns and lessen anxiety associated with practicum and supervision, as well as help trainees and their supervisors discuss supervision-related assumptions and expectations.

Based upon the results of this study indicating overall higher perceptions of preparedness dependent upon non full-time faculty supervisors, counselor education programs can utilize part-time faculty and doctoral students as effective supervisors. To assist in counselor development during field experience, supervisors can bring their own clinical experiences to the supervisory process along with offering support for new counselor trainees. Also, supervisors can openly discuss supervisory roles, expectations, feedback and evaluation at the onset of supervision to help clarify any misconceptions and ease anxiety counselor trainees may bring to their first supervision experiences. Through these strategies, trainees can focus on their work with clients and developing autonomy as a professional counselor (Yontef, 1997) within the supportive learning environment of supervision (Sweitzer & King, 2004).

Recommendations for Future Research

Future research based upon this study should include the replication of this study with a larger sample, and with master's level trainees from programs with and without doctoral programs of study in correct proportion to the numbers of students represented by all CACREP-accredited programs.

Although this study found significant relationships between overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision preparation and various aspects of supervision, formal supervision training did not have an influence upon overall perceptions of preparedness. To build upon the findings of this study, future research could investigate specific factors that lead to the significant relationships found. Included in these factors would be academic interventions and non-academic, life experience factors leading to perceptions of preparedness for supervision.

Specifically, each of the five aspect areas of supervision should be studied independently. As this study minimally attempted to determine factors leading to perceptions of preparedness, the following are offered as a guide for future research. Factors leading to expectations in supervision could be based upon past supervision relationships or other life experiences (Skovholt & Rønnestad, 1992) including attending personal counseling. Likewise, receptivity to feedback may be based upon past experiences with feedback (Page & Hulse-Killacky, 1999), and may be influenced by the quality of the supervisory relationship and a need for acceptance (Sweitzer & King, 2004). Evaluation may also be influenced by the quality of the supervisory relationship and past life experiences.

Participants in this research study reported significantly higher overall perceptions of preparedness if supervised by part-time faculty versus those supervised by full-time faculty. Fernando (2003) found that counselor trainees preferred doctoral students supervisors to faculty supervisors, and noted the influence of supervisory style upon counselor trainees' satisfaction with supervision and perceived self-efficacy. Exploration into why counselor trainees have varying perceptions of preparedness based upon type of supervisor and supervisory style can provide additional insight into supervisory relationships and influence upon counselor development; this research could examine differences based upon whether trainees are attending programs with or without doctoral programs of study. Also, the impact of didactic supervisory relationships upon perceptions of preparedness for supervision, preparedness for clinical work with clients, and overall trainee growth during field experience could be investigated.

A further examination into the influence of a doctoral program upon master's level counselor trainees' preparedness perceptions would be an interesting inquiry, thus offering master's only programs information upon which classroom-based discussions and supervision strategies could be developed. Focus groups with counselor trainees could help identify the impact of doctoral students assisting in classroom teaching and other mentoring activities upon student preparation for practicum supervision. Focus groups with trainees near the end of their field experience could offer insights into how they believe they could assist in classroom activities and discussions to help prepare students for practicum supervision.

Experimental research based upon this study's findings could involve the effects upon perceptions of preparedness through a specialized pre-practicum supervision

training program similar to that of McGraw's (1996) study exposing students to supervision prior to entering practicum. This training program could involve preparation strategies for all or only specific aspects of supervision. For instance, students in an advanced counseling techniques class would be divided equally into two groups; the class professor would provide one group of students with on-going supervision-based evaluation of real-play demonstrations, and the other group would be evaluated in a typically class basis with feedback offered only in conjunction with graded demonstrations. Later during their practicum semester, these students would complete a survey on how prepared they believed they were for supervisory evaluation to determine if continuous exposure to supervision-based evaluation influenced preparation for the evaluative process actually experienced in supervision.

As this research study's participants were surveyed in the middle of their practicum semester, future research could examine the effects of time and supervisory experiences upon perceptions of preparedness for practicum. For instance, trainees could be surveyed at the beginning of practicum, in the middle of practicum, and at the end of their practicum semester.

Conclusions

This research study explored master's level counselor trainees' perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision. It also attempted to determine possible factors leading to these perceptions. The goal of this study was to glimpse a view of supervision preparedness from the perspective of counselor trainees as opposed to that of practicum supervisors, an important view that has been overlooked in previous research. Studies

with student research participants such as those of Cross and Brown (1983), McGraw (1996), and Worthington and Roehlke (1979) investigated various aspects of supervision and factors influencing supervision outcome, but no research was found exploring student perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision.

Findings from this research revealed significant positive relationships between counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceived preparation for various aspects of supervision. For the various aspects of supervision, the strongest relationships were found between overall perceptions of preparedness and preparation for what is required in supervision and to accept guidance and support through supervision. The weakest relationship was between overall perceptions and preparation for supervisory evaluation. Through supervision-based strategies employed in classroom learning environments, counselor educators may be able to help prepare all counseling students for practicum supervision. Additionally, supervisors can openly discuss aspects of supervision in an effort to assess preparedness at the onset of supervision.

These research findings also revealed significant positive relationships between counselor trainees' overall perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision and perceptions of practicum supervision experience to date as well as with comfort experienced with receiving feedback in supervision. These relationships indicate that the level of supervisory preparation influences the supervisory experience and trainees' comfort level with supervisory feedback.

Another significant finding was consistently higher overall perceptions of preparedness for trainees being supervised by part-time faculty. This finding was

substantiated by comments from respondents concerning the clinical experience part-time faculty bring to supervision. This clinical experience may help trainees feel more connected to part-time faculty, and may also be a contributing factor in reported higher overall perceptions of preparedness by counselor trainees from academic programs with a doctoral counseling program than from master's only programs.

Although numerous positive relationships were revealed in this study, the most important finding points to a need to better prepare future counselor trainees for practicum supervision, and for supervisors to appraise the level of preparedness new trainees bring to the supervisory relationship. The justification for better preparation and appraisal of preparedness is based upon neutral average responses to every question in this study on the perceptions of preparedness for practicum supervision, meaning that counselor trainees feel neither prepared nor unprepared for supervision.

Hopefully the findings of this study will encourage counselor educators to augment their programs and courses with supervision preparation strategies so that students may begin practicum feeling better prepared than the participants in this study. For supervisors, findings from this study can form the basis for a dialogue at the onset of supervision to determine the needs of counselor trainees, and thus help mitigate potential obstacles to practicum experiences resulting from areas lacking in preparation for supervision.

This exploratory study examined counselor trainees' perceptions of practicum supervision. It is hoped that others will develop more studies on this topic and promote conversations that will lead to enhancements in how students are prepared for practicum supervision.

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Appendix A

Human Subjects Committee Approval

*University Committee for the Protection
of Human Subjects in Research
University of New Orleans*

Form Number: 03FEB05

(please refer to this number in all future correspondence concerning this protocol)

Principal Investigator: Diana Hulse-Killacky, Ph.D. Title: Professor
Jannette Sturm-Mexic, M.Ed. Doctoral Candidate

Department: Educational Leadership, Couns & Found College: Education

Project Title: Counselor Trainees' Perceptions of Preparedness For Practicum Supervision

Dates of Proposed Project Period From 01/15/05 to 04/15/05

Approval Status:

Full Board Review

Approved Date: 1/18/05

Expedite

Deferred Date:

Exempt

Disapproved Date:

Project requires review more than annually. Review every _____ months.

**approval is for 1 year from approval date only and may be renewed yearly.*

1st continuation Signature of IRB Chair

Date:

2nd continuation Signature of IRB Chair

Date:

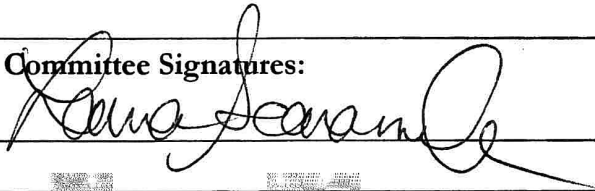
3rd continuation Signature of IRB Chair

Date:

4th continuation Signature of IRB Chair

Date:

Committee Signatures:



Laura Scaramella, Ph.D. (Chair)

Pamela Jenkins, Ph.D.

Anthony Kontos, Ph.D. (Associate chair)

Richard B. Speaker, Ph.D.

Gary Talarchek, Ph.D.

Kari Walsh

Kathleen Whalen, LSW

L. Allen Witt, Ph.D.

Appendix B

Text of Introductory Email to Chairperson or Program Coordinator

Subject: Request for practicum student research participants

Dear _____,

As part of my doctoral program of study in counselor education at the University of New Orleans, I am currently preparing to distribute an Internet-based survey that I developed to collect data for my dissertation research on the perceptions of master's-level practicum students concerning their preparedness for practicum supervision. The survey is the Counselor Trainee Preparedness Perceptions Survey – Practicum Supervision (CTPPS-PS). The CTPPS-PS contains 38 questions and will take approximately 15 minutes to complete.

The results of this research study will hopefully benefit future practicum students by helping identify which aspects of supervision should be addressed through pre-practicum preparation, and provide a foundation upon which counselor educators can develop pre-practicum supervision preparation strategies.

I am requesting that your practicum professor(s) distribute a consent letter and the Internet address for the CTPPS-PS to practicum students in your program and encourage these students to complete the survey. I would appreciate if you would reply to this email to let me know if you are willing to allow your students to participate in this study along with the name and email address of your practicum professor(s). Also, if you would prefer a non-electronic version of the CTPPS-PS, please let me know.

Thank you in advance for considering this request. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me, or you may contact my Dissertation Chair, Dr. Diana Hulse-Killacky.

Respectfully,

Jannette Sturm-Mexic, M.Ed., LPC, LMFT, NCC
Doctoral Candidate
University of New Orleans
Phone: (504) 280-6661
eMail: jsturmme@uno.edu

Dissertation Chair:
Dr. Diana Hulse-Killacky
eMail: dhulseki@uno.edu

Appendix C
Consent Form

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

You are being asked to participate in a dissertation research study conducted by Jannette Sturm-Mexic, a doctoral candidate in counselor education from the University of New Orleans. The purpose of this study is to investigate counselor trainees' perceptions about preparedness for practicum supervision.

The first stage in participation is giving your consent to participate. Your participation then requires completing the Counselor Trainee Preparedness Perceptions Survey - Practicum Supervision (CTPPS-PS) survey on the Internet or in paper format. This survey contains a total of 38 questions, each of which requires a single response. Once you complete the CTPPS-PS, instructions will direct you to securely submit your responses. Approximately 15 minutes is required to complete this survey.

The researcher does not perceive any risks from your involvement in this study. You may feel some discomfort answering the questions in this survey. If you do, this discomfort is likely to be short lived. You have the right to terminate at any time during your participation. If you wish to discuss any concerns, please contact the researcher immediately at the number listed at the end of this consent form.

Participation benefits future practicum students by helping identify which aspects of supervision should be addressed through pre-practicum preparation, and provide a foundation upon which counselor educators can develop pre-practicum supervision preparation strategies.

Your participation is strictly voluntary and you can withdraw consent at any time without consequences. You also may choose not to participate.

No personal information such as names, date-of-birth, or social security numbers will be asked from participants in order to assure anonymity. The dissertation methodologist, faculty advisor, and the researcher will be the only individuals to have access to the data. The data will be kept in a safe locked and secure location when not in use; the electronic data will be deleted from the computer's program and system once the data collection and analyses are completed.

Completing and submitting the survey indicates your consent to participate in this study. The survey can be accessed on the Internet at <http://www.jannette.com>.

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this research study. If you have any questions or concerns, or if you are interested in the findings of this study, please contact:

Researcher: Jannette Sturm-Mexic, M.Ed., LPC, LMFT, NCC
University of New Orleans
Phone: 504-280-6661
Email: jsturmme@uno.edu

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Diana Hulse-Killacky
University of New Orleans
Phone: 504-280-6661
Email: dhulseki@uno.edu

Appendix D

Counselor Trainee Preparedness Perceptions Survey – Practicum Supervision

Counselor Trainee Preparedness Perceptions Survey – Practicum Supervision

copyright Jannette Sturm-Mexic, 2004

The purpose of this survey is to assist in research concerning the perceptions of counselor trainees about how prepared they believe they were for practicum supervision. Please answer all questions as honestly as possible as the results of this survey may improve the way students are prepared in the future for practicum supervision. This survey is anonymous and received approval to be administered by the University of New Orleans Human Subjects Committee. The survey will take approximately 15 minutes to complete.

Section A – General Information: Please answer the following questions about you, your university, and your supervision related experiences.

1. What is your gender? Male Female

2. What is your age?
 - 24 or younger
 - 25-29
 - 30-34
 - 35-39
 - 40-44
 - 45-49
 - 50 or older

3. Which culture do you most identify yourself with? (please check only **ONE**)
 - African-American
 - American Indian or Alaska Native
 - Asian
 - Caucasian
 - Hispanic
 - Middle Eastern
 - Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
 - Other, please specify: _____

4. What is the two-letter abbreviation for the state in which your university is located? __ __

5. Does your counseling academic program have a doctoral program of study? Yes No

6. Which of the following best describes your practicum site? (please check only **ONE**; if you have more than one practicum site, please select your primary site or the site at which you spend the most time)
 - Field site, such as an agency, school, in-/out-patient facility, that is not directly owned or administered through your counseling academic program
 - Lab-based or field site that is directly owned or administered through your counseling academic program AND at which you counsel “real” clients
 - Classroom setting or lab-based that is directly owned or administered through your counseling academic program AND at which you “counsel” role-playing clients or students in your counseling academic program
 - Other, please specify: _____

7. Do you receive individual supervision at your practicum site?
- No
 - Yes, with a supervisor (please check only **ONE**):
 - employed/contracted by the practicum site
 - who is a full-time faculty member
 - who is a part-time or adjunct faculty member
 - who is a doctoral student
8. Do you receive group supervision at your practicum site?
- No
 - Yes, with a supervisor (please check only **ONE**):
 - employed/contracted by the practicum site
 - who is a full-time faculty member
 - who is a part-time or adjunct faculty member
 - who is a doctoral student
9. Do you receive individual supervision at your university?
- No
 - Yes, with a supervisor (please check only **ONE**):
 - who is a full-time faculty member
 - who is a part-time or adjunct faculty member
 - who is a doctoral student
10. Do you receive group supervision at your university?
- No
 - Yes, with a supervisor (please check only **ONE**):
 - who is a full-time faculty member
 - who is a part-time or adjunct faculty member
 - who is a doctoral student
11. Approximately how many total hours of supervision do you receive weekly (please check only **ONE**)?
- Less than 1 hour
 - 1 hour or more but less than 2 hours
 - 2 hours or more but less than 3 hours
 - 3 hours or more but less than 4 hours
 - 4 or more hours
12. Prior to beginning practicum supervision, what formal supervision preparation did you have (please check only **ONE**; if more than one applies, please select the one you believe was the most effective in providing supervision preparation to you)?
- Attended a supervision course
 - Attended a supervision preparation or informational workshop/seminar
 - Received supervision information during a practicum-related presentation
 - No formal supervision preparation received

Section B – General Practicum Supervision and Preparation: The following questions ask about your general preparation for and concerns about practicum supervision. Please answer each of the following questions, selecting **ONE** choice on a 7-point scale that best answers each question.

1. How accurate do you believe was your prior knowledge of the purpose of supervision?

 Very accurate 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 Not accurate at all

2. Prior to beginning supervision, how concerned were you about being supervised?

 Very concerned 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 Not concerned at all

3. How prepared do you believe you were to accept guidance and support from your supervisor(s)?

 Very prepared 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 Not prepared at all

4. How prepared do you believe you were to ask for assistance from your supervisor(s)?

 Very prepared 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 Not prepared at all

5. How prepared do you believe you were for what is required from you in supervision?

 Very prepared 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 Not prepared at all

6. Overall, how prepared do you believe you were for supervision?

 Very prepared 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 Not prepared at all

Section C – Practicum Supervision Expectations: The following questions ask about the expectations you had for supervision prior to beginning practicum. Please answer each of the following questions, selecting **ONE** choice on a 7-point scale that best answers each question.

1. How accurate do you believe your expectations were of what you would experience in supervision?

 Very accurate 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 Not accurate at all

2. How accurate do you believe your expectations were of what your supervisors would provide to you through supervision?

 Very accurate 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 Not accurate at all

3. How accurate do you believe your expectations were of what your supervisors would require of you for supervision?

 Very accurate 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 Not accurate at all

Section D – Practicum Supervision Structure and Sessions: The following questions ask about the structure and process of supervision with emphasis on what actually occurs during supervision sessions in various formats. Please answer each of the following questions, selecting **ONE** choice on a 7-point scale that best answers each question.

1. How prepared do you believe you were for how supervision sessions would be structured?

 Very prepared 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 Not prepared at all

2. How aware were you that each of your supervisors might approach supervision differently?

 Very aware 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 Not aware at all

3. How prepared do you believe you were for what happens during individual supervision sessions?

 Very prepared 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 Not prepared at all

4. How prepared do you believe you were for what happens during group supervision sessions?

 Very prepared 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 Not prepared at all

5. How prepared do you believe you were for what happens during practicum site supervision sessions?

 Very prepared 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 Not prepared at all

6. How prepared do you believe you were for what happens during university supervision sessions?

 Very prepared 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 Not prepared at all

7. How prepared do you believe you were to address personal issues that may be discussed during supervision?

 Very prepared 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 Not prepared at all

Section E – Practicum Supervision Evaluation: The following questions relate to the evaluative component of practicum supervision. Please answer each of the following questions, selecting **ONE** choice on a 7-point scale that best answers each question.

1. How aware were you of the various ways you would be evaluated in supervision?

 Very aware 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 Not aware at all

2. Do you believe the evaluative component of supervision influences your supervisory experience?

 Definitely influences 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 No influence at all

3. Would you be comfortable disclosing a lack of competence during individual supervision?

 Very comfortable 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 Very uncomfortable

Section F – Practicum Supervision Feedback: For the following questions, feedback is defined as positive, negative, and corrective feedback provided to encourage learning, self-reflection, and growth while protecting clients’ rights to obtain quality counseling services. Please answer each of the following questions, selecting **ONE** choice on a 7-point scale that best answers each of the following questions.

1. How prepared do you believe you were for receiving feedback from your supervisor(s)?

 Very prepared 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 Not prepared at all

2. How prepared do you believe you were for receiving feedback from other counselor trainees?

 Very prepared 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 Not prepared at all

3. How prepared do you believe you were for giving feedback to other counselor trainees?

 Very prepared 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 Not prepared at all

4. How prepared do you believe you were for giving feedback to your supervisors?

 Very prepared 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 Not prepared at all

5. Do you believe that receiving feedback during your coursework prepared you for the use of feedback in supervision?

 Definitely prepared 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 No effect on preparation

6. Overall, how comfortable have you been with receiving feedback in supervision?

 Very comfortable 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 Very uncomfortable

Section G – General Practicum Supervision Experience: Please answer the first question below, selecting the **ONE** choice on a scale of 1 to 7 that best answers the question.

1. Overall, how would you describe your practicum supervision experience to date?

 Very positive 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 Very negative

Please use the area below to offer any comments you would like relating to your experiences or beliefs concerning your preparation for practicum supervision.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey and share your perceptions with us. If you would like to obtain a copy of the final results of this research, please email Jannette Sturm-Mexic at jsturmme@uno.edu.

VITA

Jannette Sturm-Mexic was born and raised in New Orleans, Louisiana. In 1975 she earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Music from Newcomb College of Tulane University in New Orleans, Louisiana. She earned a Master's of Education degree in Counseling in 2002 from the University of New Orleans and completed the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy degree in Counselor Education at the University of New Orleans in August 2005.

Jannette is a Licensed Professional Counselor and Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist in the state of Louisiana, and she is also a National Certified Counselor and a Registered Play Therapist. She has had experience counseling diverse client populations in community, school, and private practice settings. Jannette is an advocate of creative process in counseling, and has developed a workshop series entitled "Not Just For Little Kids" to share expressive arts counseling techniques for adolescents, adults, couples, and families.

Jannette has authored workshops and presented at local, state, national, and international conferences on a wide range of counseling topics including expressive art techniques, play therapy, counseling children and adolescents, effective communication skills, special emotional needs of gifted children, ethics and HIPPA requirements, reporting suspected child abuse, educational research, assessment and appraisal, and professional counselor identity.

An honored community activist and historic preservationist, Jannette will remain in New Orleans developing her private practice, seeking grant approval for community-based counseling programs, and teaching as an adjunct professor in local counseling programs. She will seek board approval as a licensure supervisor in order to continue supervising and mentoring future professional counselors, and intends to author books to help developing counselors successfully transition to professional careers in counseling. Jannette also intends to seek permanent funding for a fellowship she has established to provide master's level counseling students with opportunities to receive advanced training in play therapy and expressive art techniques from experienced private practice family clinicians and to attend professional clinical training workshops and conferences.