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A Delphi Study: How Counselor Educators in Career Counseling Courses Prepare School Counselors to Address Career Readiness

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A Delphi Study: How Counselor Educators in Career Counseling Courses Prepare School Counselors to Address Career Readiness

Nicole Garncarz DeRonck, Ph.D., Ed. D.

University of Connecticut, 2015

This goal of this study is to understand the relationship between the preparation that career counseling courses at the post-secondary level provide school counselors and the implications it has on promoting career readiness. The Delphi method was used to garner consensus of a group of experts on how to prepare pre-service school counselors to conduct career counseling, and to promote and measure career readiness in their work with K-12 students. Seventeen leaders in the field of career counseling who are also counselor educators agreed to fully participate as experts in this study (round one n=5, round two n=7, round three n=6). Sixty-nine unique items related to the preparation of school counselors to conduct career counseling, to promote career readiness, and to measure the effectiveness of career readiness interventions were identified by the experts. The overall level of agreement in this study was 79.7 %. Items were compared and contrasted to the 12 Career Ready Practices (National Association of State Directors of Career Technical Education Consortium, 2013). Suggestions for counselor educators will be provided based on the results of this study.

A Delphi Study: How Counselor Educators in Career Counseling Courses Prepare School
Counselors to Address Career Readiness

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University of Connecticut

2015

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APPROVAL PAGE

Doctor of Philosophy Dissertation

A Delphi Study: How Counselor Educators in Career Counseling Courses Prepare School
Counselors to Address Career Readiness

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This dissertation is dedicated to my family.

To my husband Jay, who believed in me and supported the crazy idea of a Ph.D. in a year while raising a baby. I thank you for all you gave up for me to do this. For my son Noah, may you continue to be curious, inquisitive and always find the joy in learning new things. For my parents Chris and Jackie, who instilled in me the attributes of perseverance and fortitude. For my sisters Laura and Gabby who have cheered me on at every step of the way. And for Marjorie DiGalbo and Shana Boothroyd, for the all the extra help caring for Noah so I could get the work done. Without all of you this would not be possible.

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Chapter I

Statement of the Problem

In recent years the National dialogue has intensified around the topic of career readiness. There has been a shift in the labor market from the Industrial Age to the Knowledge Value Era where the tools of production are now secondary to the creative processes of workers, and where critical thinking and intellect are the real value workers bring to their jobs (Thornburg, 2002). Workers are now required to possess cognitive, behavioral and technical skills to be successful in a workplace where abstraction, system thinking, experimentation and collaboration are highly valued by employers. (ACTE, 2010; Career Readiness Partner Council, 2012a ; Carnavale & Desrochers, 2003; Chegg, 2013; Conley, 2012; Guidry, 2012; Gysbers & Lapan, 2009; Hart Research Associates, 2013;Thornburg, 2002).

Trends in the job market indicate there is an increased demand for workers with advanced training beyond high school (Achieve, Inc 2012; Career Readiness Partner Council, 2012a; Carnavale & Desrochers, 2003; College Board, 2011; Fraser, 2012; Thornburg, 2002). Furthermore, opportunities in occupations that require technical skills are projected to increase 21.5 percent by 2022, nearly double of the overall job growth and development (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2012a; Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE) (2010). Despite the predictions of job growth, employers continue to report that recent graduates are underprepared for the job market. A recent report indicated that of 1000 hiring managers surveyed across varying fields, only 39 percent found that new hires who were recent graduates were prepared for a job in their field of study (Chegg, 2013). Furthermore, students are not aware of what they don't know. Wide gaps exist between the perception of recent grads and

employers on the reality of preparedness in the areas of written communication, prioritizing work and organization (Chegg, 2013; Grasgreen, 2013).

While much of the focus has been on reforming the educational system to foster college readiness (i.e., Common Core, Teacher Evaluation Systems), it takes more than just rigorous academics to be considered career ready (Career Readiness Partner Council, 2012). ACTE (2010) asserts that core academics, employability skills and technical skills play a critical role in determining one's career readiness. Not to be confused with the Common Core State Standards developed by the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices in 2010, core academics are cognitive skills that are academic in nature but transcend the classroom to the work of work, such as being able to read, comprehend and utilize a technical manual (ACTE, 2010; Career Readiness Partner Council, 2012; Guidry, 2012). Employability skills are skills such as collaboration/ teamwork, responsibility, and goal setting/problem solving (ACTE, 2010; Career Readiness Partner Council, 2012; Guidry, 2012). Technical skills are related to understanding some level of job-specific knowledge. These skills are often not emphasized in the traditional classroom, but can be enhanced in experiential situations such as in an internship or job shadow where students are working side by side with professionals in the field or through career counseling and exploration (ACTE, 2010; Career Readiness Partner Council, 2012; Garmise, 2006; Guidry, 2012; Symonds, Schwartz, & Ferguson, 2011).

Studies have indicated that both Career Technical Education programs and strong college and career counseling programs in schools have made a significant impact on career readiness and student achievement (ACTE, 2012; Blackhurst, Auger & Wahl, 2003; Carbonaro, 2005; Dahir, Burnham & Stone, 2009; Kelly & Price, 2009; Lapan, Gysbers & Sun, 1997; Lapan, Whitcomb & Aleman, 2012; Peterson, Long & Billups, 1999; Symonds et al., 2011; Wilkerson

et al., 2013; Whiston, et al., 2003). In the elementary and secondary school setting, it is the responsibility of the school counselor to assist students in developing career exploration and life planning skills (American School Counselor Association (ASCA), 2012; Emmett, 1997). The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) (2012) describes the role of the school counselor as one that encompasses advocacy, leadership, collaboration, and accountability. School counselors are agents of systemic change who are uniquely qualified to address the academic, personal/social, and career needs of every child by delivering a school counseling program that is comprehensive in nature (ASCA, 2012). School counselors promote equity based college and career readiness and work with all students to help them identify their personal strengths and interests, and set goals to reach their future aspirations. The literature documents improved student achievement outcomes in schools where established comprehensive school counseling programs are present (Carey & Harrington, 2010a; Carey & Harrington, 2010b; Whiston, Brecheisen, & Stephens, 2003; Wilkerson, Pérusse, & Hughes, 2013).

Despite their salient role in career counseling, there is a paucity of literature on how to prepare school counselors in this area. The goal of this research is to understand the relationship between the preparation that career counseling courses at the post-secondary level provide school counselors and their implications on career readiness. The goal will be attained by achieving a consensus of opinions from a group of experts teaching career counseling in school counselor pre-service programs.

Research Questions

In this study, skills and concepts that are critical to the successful preparation of school counselors in the area of career counseling and the implications it has on career readiness as perceived by counselor educators. This will be investigated by addressing the following questions:

1. How do counselor educators prepare their school counseling students to conduct career counseling in grades K-12?
2. What key concepts, attitudes, and/or skills do counselor educators believe are necessary for school counselors to promote career readiness?
3. What data do counselor educators believe is necessary for school counselors to collect to show that they are effective in career readiness with their K-12 students?

Chapter II

Literature Review

Career readiness has consistently been a concern in the United States (Hunt, 2013; Tozier, Violas & Senese, 1998; Tyler, 1974; U.S. Department of Education, n.d.a; U.S. Department of Education, n.d.b, U. S. Department of Education, n.d.c; Wittmer, 2000). Events in more recent history including the Space Race in the 1960's, the publication of A Nation at Risk in 1983 and the current administration's Blueprint for Reform, have all been driven by the desire to keep the United States as a leading a political, economic, and innovative force in the global economy (Hunt, 2013; Tozier, Violas & Senese, 1998; U.S. Department of Education, n.d.a; U.S. Department of Education, n.d.c; Wittmer, 2000). While the goals have been the same, and arguably the venue for impacting change has been the same (educational system), the needs of employers, the nature of jobs available and the technology has advanced significantly (Career Readiness Partner Council, 2012a; Carnavale & Desrochers, 2003;Garmise, 2006;Thornburg 2002; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics 2012a). Furthermore, students continue to lag behind employers' expectations for career readiness (Achieve, Inc, 2012; Chegg, 2013; University of Washington Career Center, 2006).

Historical Links and Government Role in Career Readiness

It has been a long standing belief that education is the key to maintain a democratic and economically stable society. Vocational preparation and career readiness have been a common theme in American history and legislation. As early as 1776, a plan for a formal educational system for the populous was proposed by Thomas Jefferson in the Bill for a More General Diffusion of Knowledge. This bill was ultimately defeated but the ideology clearly linked the

intent of education to provide local leaders who move the country forward in business, military endeavors, transportation and land expansion (Tozier, Violas & Senese, 1998).

In the 1840's the idea of getting an education to become wealthy or upwardly mobile was popularized by Horace Mann during his term as Secretary to the Board in Massachusetts (Tozier, Violas & Senese, 1998). Mann's 1841 study on the educated versus the uneducated workforce found that those workers who had completed a common school education had better success in their jobs and rose to higher positions within their companies. He substantiated his claims with the testimony of the businessmen in the community, thus establishing an early link between education and career readiness (Tozier, Violas & Senese, 1998).

Beginning in the 1880s with the Industrial Revolution and moving forth in to the 1920's school reform movements began to take shape. Among the complaints about the educational system, was the perception that the traditional curriculum as irrelevant to the actual needs of a modern industrial society (Nasaw, 1979). Pressure from the business community regarding worker unrest and the aforementioned concern about curriculum ushered in the Progressive Era in education (Nasaw, 1979). There were four major tenets of the Progressive education movement:

- Curriculum should be based on the interests and needs of the students
- Learning should be activity based
- Social conditions should be reflected in school curriculum, policy and procedures
- The primary goal of education was to find solutions to social problems (Tozier, Violas & Senese, 1998).

These tenets helped shape the idea of career education and the importance of employability skills and saw the roots of school guidance and counseling.

John Dewey is most notably tied to the Progressive movement. Dewey stressed the importance of engaging students in learning based on occupations they were familiar to create

thematic units across the curriculum (Dewey, 1899). He posited that exposure to the world outside of the classroom would enhance the student experience and further inform and motivate students but cautioned that the purpose should not be to educate for specific vocations, but rather as a tool to learn through vocations (Dewey, 1899; Tozier, Violas & Senese, 1998).

Dewey (1899) stated,

“The occupation supplies the child with a genuine motive; it gives him experience at first hand; it brings him into contact with realities. It does all this, but in addition it is liberalized throughout by translation into its historic values and scientific equivalencies. With the growth of the child’s mind in power and knowledge it ceases to be a pleasant occupation merely, and becomes more and more a medium, an instrument, and organ- and is thereby transformed.” (p 37)

In addition to the contributions made by Dewey, Charles W. Elliot can be credited with changing the focus of the progressive reform adding two new tenets to consider, social stability and employability skills (Tozier, Violas & Senese, 1998). He argued that schools should equip students with the attitudes and abilities necessary to be successful in the workplace. According to Tozier, Violas & Senese (1998), Elliot argued his agenda to the National Education Association in 1910, stressing that school faculty needed to embrace the role of “guiding children into appropriate life work” (p110).

Vocational and moral guidance was introduced as part of the English curriculum in Detroit in 1889 by Jesse Davis (Wittmer, 2000). It was the first time a systematic approach to school guidance appeared. Nineteen years later, Frank Parsons established the Vocational Bureau of Boston. He wrote the book *Choosing a Vocation* in 1909 which outlined a method of matching occupational characteristics to that of an individual’s personality. He emphasized the use of testing to measure aptitude and personality traits. He is credited with having significantly influenced the role of school counselors (Wittmer, 2000).

In 1917, Congress passed the Smith-Hughes Act which earmarked federal funds in the amount of \$7 million per year for the purpose of developing vocational programs in the areas of home economics, agriculture and industrial education. It also included funding for the growth of vocational guidance and educational testing. The Smith-Hughes Act marked the beginning of government involvement in funding vocational education programs (Lazerson & Grubb, 1974).

Federal funding for education increased significantly during World War II. Several Acts were legislated between 1941 and 1950. The Lanahan Act and Impact Aid Laws provided assistance for education in communities that were impacted by a military presence. In 1944, the authorization of the Servicemen's Readjustment Act informally known as the Government Issued Bill, or "G. I. Bill" was enacted which provided financial assistance to returning veterans for the purpose of post-secondary training (U.S. Department of Education, n.d.a). Nearly 8 million veterans took advantage of the funding and by 1947 veterans accounted for 49% of college admissions (U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, n.d.a). According to Tyler (1974), the impact of the G.I. Bill was wide reaching. Approximately 30 percent of WWII veterans attended college, 44 percent attended training at less than a college level, 18 percent went to on-the-job training programs and another eight percent attended on-the-farm training programs. It was extended to veterans of the Korean War, preserved as the Montgomery G.I. Bill in 1983 and extended again in 2011 to provide educational benefits to service men and women who saw combat service post 9/11 (U. S. Department of Veterans Affairs, n.d.a).

It was not until 1958 that government again became involved in education for the purpose of advancing a highly skilled workforce. The National Defense Education Act marked the first time the federal government made sweeping reforms in education (Hunt, 2013). The purpose of the NDEA was to address national security needs as the US entered the Cold War with Russia

and the launch of Sputnik (Hunt, 201; Wittmer, 2000). It lent financial support to schools to who placed a focus on math, science, technology and foreign language from the elementary level through the vocational and university settings (Hunt, 2013; Lazerson & Grubb, 1974; Tyler, 1974, U.S. Department of Education, n.d.a). It also poured vast amounts of dollars in to counselor education programs to train middle and high school counselors because it was believed there were not enough to appropriately guide students towards math and science careers. This was said to be one of the reasons the Russians were able to launch Sputnik (Wittmer, 2000). The number secondary school counselors tripled between 1958 and 1967, but as the services came more directive, students who were non-college bound were lost in the process (Wittmer, 2000).

At this time, James Conant's book, *The American High School Today*, was released. In it Conant made three recommendations to systemize vocational education. He argued that schools should provide course work that was sequential and lead to development of marketable skills. Furthermore, students should have the opportunity to choose a vocational or academic track with room to move between them. Finally, he stated that this should be done under one roof-that comprehensive high schools should make available a variety of vocational educational offerings that would prepare students to gain employment within their communities (Tozier, Violas & Senese, 1998). His book and recommendations ushered in the decline of technical high schools and helped stir the growth of community colleges in the 1960s and 70s as a vital part of vocational education and career readiness (Tozier, Violas & Senese, 1998).

The 1960s and 70s brought further change as to how education was supported by the federal government as it turned its attention to equity in education. Legislation enacted that impacted vocational education included the Vocation Act of 1963 which established grants to states with vocational education (Tyler, 1974) and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act

(ESEA) of 1965. ESEA was written in response to President Johnson's War on Poverty with the underscoring premise that children needed equal access to education to lead productive lives (Crawford, 2011). It remains the largest reaching federal education policy on record. It sets federal funding limits and establishes legal requirements to receive federal assistance. The funding, referred to as Title 1 funds, is provided to school systems that have students with the widest achievement gaps to help provide a more equitable education and to help close gaps (Crawford, 2011). ESEA provides discretionary funding via grants to increase the number of school counselors in the elementary level and a myriad of grants to increase career readiness through the improvement of opportunities for students in tech prep programs (U.S. Department of Education, n.d.b). Congress periodically reviews and revises ESEA to account for changes in the educational climate. Since its inception, ESEA has been reauthorized six times most notably as The No Child Left Behind Act in 2001 and most recently in 2010 as A Blueprint for Reform (Crawford, 2011).

The late 20th and early 21st Centuries were marked by the globalization of the workforce and the out sourcing of jobs overseas creating an employment gap for low and semi-skilled jobs (The Center for Educational Innovation – Public Education Association (CEI-PEA) (2011). It saw continued federal school reform efforts and the establishment of the U.S. Department of Education in 1980. Three years later, the National Commission of Excellence in Education published, "A Nation at Risk" (U.S. Department of Education, n.d.c.). The report indicated that the risk Americans were facing was coming from foreign business and technology that was outpacing advances in the U.S. where nationally the academic progress was on the decline. The report cited a promise made,

"...that all children by virtue of their own efforts, competently guided, can hope to attain the mature and informed judgment needed to secure gainful employment, and to manage their own

lives, thereby serving not only their own interests but also the progress of society itself (U.S. Department of Education, n.d.c., p.1)”.

Among the indicators of risk, was the outcry from business and military leaders that they were spending millions of dollars training employees on basic skills in math, reading and writing to be able to perform job duties (U.S. Department of Education, n.d.c.).

In response to “A Nation at Risk”, the National Commission on Vocational Education published a report called “The Unfinished Agenda: The Role of Vocational Education in the High School” in 1984. It outlined concerns in vocational education such as the lack of integration of curriculum into core courses, and the public’s negative perception of occupations in the trades (“The Unfinished Agenda”, 1984). Its aim was to draw attention to the benefits of a vocational education in a climate where both enrollment in and federal funding for technical programs was on the decline. Among its benefits, it stressed the inclusion of guidance for career planning and lifelong learning and the ability of graduates in the vocations to find employment regardless of the economic climate (“The Unfinished Agenda”, 1984). It argued contrary to public opinion, that males who graduated from vocational programs were twice likely to working in craft occupations than their counterparts in general education. Craft occupations offered better compensation than jobs that required no specific skills (“The Unfinished Agenda”, 1984; Tozier, Violas & Senese, 1998).

The Carl D. Perkins Act which aimed to increase the quality of technical education was also introduced in 1984. It was reauthorized in 1998 and again in 2006. The Perkins Act marked the change from vocational education to Career Technical Education (CTE). It maintains that five percent of the states’ budgets must be allocated to career education in both secondary and post-secondary institutions. It allocated separate funds for the development of Tech Prep programs in partnerships with community colleges so that students could receive college credits

while studying the trades in high school (American Youth Policy Forum, 2008). It provides 1.3 billion dollars to career and technical education programs to schools in all 50 states until 2016. Furthermore, the 2006 reauthorization included accountability standards on performance measures via state vocational testing (American Youth Policy Forum, 2008).

In 1994, Goals 2000, the Educate America Act was adopted by the federal government. Its intent was to improve academic achievement and prepare students for the workforce by provide funding for the development of performance standards at the state and local levels (U.S. Department of Education, n.d.d.). It created public outcry that this was an attempt by the federal government to take over education, but that did not occur. State and local education agencies were give control over the content (U.S. Department of Education, n.d.d.). This legislation's mission also included increasing parent participation and improving teaching (U.S. Department of Education, n.d.d.).

The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) was passed as the reauthorization of ESEA by the G. W. Bush Administration in 2001 (Crawford, 2011). NCLB was a response to the widening achievement gap. It established accountability efforts that included accountability through statewide testing, having highly qualified teachers, and creating challenging curriculums (U.S. Department of Education, 2010c). It set the goal of 100 percent of American students becoming proficient at math, reading and writing by 2014 so that U.S. could compete in the global economy (National Coalition of Parents in Education, n.d.a). Each school and district was required to make a ten percent gain each year. Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) was the measure used to assure schools were making continuous and sustained improvement (National Coalition of Parents in Education, n.d.a). When local districts failed to me the AYP, they were put on notice for need of improvement. Sanctions could be applied to Title I schools that did not meet

their AYP (National Coalition of Parents in Education, n.d.a). The most recent outcome data indicated that 48 percent of U.S. schools did not meet AYP requirements in 2011, an increase of nine percentage points from 2010 (Usher, 2012).

While public education responded to NCLB to address college readiness, the little was done to integrate career readiness for all students (CEI-PIA, 2011; Phelps, 2002). According to the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2012a), the ten fastest growing occupations through 2016 require a technical education (CEI-PIA, 2011). CEI-PIA (2011) reported that in New York City alone 34 percent of high school students are entering the workforce and not pursuing a college education. This gap is a major oversight in this legislation and threatens to advance the age old problem- not preparing the workforce to meet the needs of the new economy (CEI-PIA, 2011).

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 was an economic policy that funded a myriad of programs to jump start the economy including the Race to the Top Grants (RTT). States could apply to receive grants that supported and informed educational practices with the objective of improving student achievement. This included college and career readiness (U.S. Department of Education 2010b). The RTT grants would dovetail President Obama's overarching goal to restore the US as a world leader in college graduates by 2020 as outlined in "A Blueprint for Reform" (Crawford, 2012; U.S. Department of Education 2010b).

In 2010 "A Blueprint for Reform: The Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act" was passed by the Obama Administration. Among his five major priorities in this document is to develop students that are college and career ready. It promoted the adoption of the Common Core Standards to accomplish this goal. AYP would now be determined on academic growth during a school year, though standardized tests would still be the measure

(Crawford, 2012). Furthermore, new reporting standards were added including college enrollment rates and job placement.

Career Readiness Defined

No clear consensus has been achieved in determining exactly what makes a student prepared for life in the world of work (Career Readiness Partner Council, 2012b, Conforti, 2013; Guidry, 2012). Some definitions center on skills for learning entry level jobs, while others view it as collection of broader skills needed to function in the workplace (Career Readiness Partner Council, 2012b, Conforti, 2013; Gysbers, 2013). Only nine states have adopted their own definition of career readiness. Of the remaining, 40 states have adopted the Common Core State Initiative Standards which has its own definition of college and career ready. Nebraska has neither adopted the Common Core nor a career readiness definition (Conforti, 2013). Both Conforti (2013) and Conley (2012) note that agreement is beginning to form around the outcome of career readiness which is that a student is able to enroll in a college level or vocational program and complete it without remediation.

Career readiness and college readiness have often been paired in the literature (Career Readiness Partner Council, 2012a; Gysbers, 2013). In these instances, skills for being successful in the college or university setting are emphasized and often little attention is paid to the distinct skills required for a vocational setting (Achieve Inc & NASDCTEC, 2014; CEI-PIA, 2011; Phelps, 2002). While both require a strong academic program focused on cognitive skills, it takes more than just rigorous academics to be considered career ready (Career Readiness Partner Council, 2012a; Conley, 2012).

Career readiness is linked to cognitive skills (ACTE, 2010; Achieve, Inc., 2012; Carnavale & Desrochers, 2003; Guidry, 2012). Cognitive skills are those that are portable from

one context to the next (ACTE, 2010; Achieve, Inc., 2012; Carnavale & Desrochers, 2003; Guidry, 2012). They are skills that nearly everyone needs to know to be able to successfully hold a job. Academic curriculums that are knowledge based and have purposefully benchmarked standards such as the Common Core provide the basis for acquiring a more demanding career related skill set at the post-secondary level and beyond (Career Readiness Partner Council, 2012a; Carnavale & Desrochers, 2003; College Board, 2011; Garmise, 2006; Guidry, 2012; National Governors Association Center for Best Practices 2010; U.S. Department of Education, 2010a, 2010b, n.d.c). Mathematics and English Language Arts are the two core subject areas that proffer the most benefit for career readiness (ACTE, 2010; Conley, 2012; Conforti, 2013; Guidry, 2012; National Association of State Directors of Career Technical Education Consortium (NASDCTEC), n.d.a, n.d.c; National Governors Association Center for Best Practices 2010; U.S. Department of Labor, 1991). These content areas teach strategies that foster problem formulation, research, data interpretation, communication and precision/accuracy (Conley, 2012).

Students in grades K-12 also need to learn skills sets that are related to employability and technical ability to be considered career ready. Employability skills are often attitudinal and include attributes like adaptability, collaboration and teamwork, responsibility, professionalism, appropriate use of technology and use of appropriate technology, and ethical behavior (ACTE, 2010; Career Readiness Partner Council, 2012a ; Conley, 2012; Guidry, 2012; Gysbers & Lapan, 2009). Technical skills are those skills that are directly related to performing the work of a specific occupation and are often linked to certification or licensure (Guidry, 2012). There are 16 Career Clusters and 79 specific pathways that were developed through the States Career

Initiative that highlight the technical skills needed in each field. The pathways also include the requisite behavioral and academic skills (ACTE, 2010; NASDCTEC, n.d.a.).

Concern for Career Readiness

It is evident by tracing the history and legislation in education reform that vocational preparation and career readiness have been a common theme since 1776 with Jefferson's Bill for a More General Diffusion of Knowledge to present day with Obama's Blueprint for Reform (Tozier, Violas & Senese, 1998; U.S. Department of Education, 2010a). The lack of such preparation has been brought to the forefront through the lenses of nation building, national security, equity, and globalization yet 238 years later the same concern exists (Hunt, 2013; Tozier, Violas & Senese, 1998; Tyler, 1974; U.S. Department of Education, n.d.a; U.S. Department of Education, n.d.c; Wittmer, 2000). Despite all the reform efforts, the gap between available skilled jobs and people trained to do them has widened. Fifty-two million jobs in the U.S. are unfilled due to a lack of highly skilled workers (College Board, 2011; Guidry, 2012). The reason for this is a shift in the American workforce that appears to be two fold. There is a tendency for occupations within newly created jobs to require at least some college education. Additionally, there has been an increase in the need for some post-secondary skills even for jobs that traditionally have not required them in the past (Achieve, Inc 2012; Career Readiness Partner Council, 2012a; Carnavale & Desrochers, 2003; College Board, 2011; Fraser, 2012; Thornburg, 2002). Moreover, compensation for workers increases substantially when some education is obtained beyond high school. Carnavale & Desrochers (2003) note that an associate's degree provides a wage boost of approximately 20-30 percent over a high school diploma. A bachelor's degree can raise the average salary an additional 10- 20 percent (Carnavale & Desrochers, 2003).

Global competitiveness and equity in accessing higher standards of living are in jeopardy if the gap does not begin to close (Carnavale & Desrochers, 2003; CEI-PIA, 2011; College Board, 2011; Crawford, 2012; Fraser, 2012; U.S. Department of Education 2010a, 2010b). President Barack Obama commented on the importance of this notion in the introduction to “A Blueprint for Reform: The Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act” (Department of Education 2010a).

We must ensure that every student graduates from high school well prepared for college and a career. A world-class education is also a moral imperative – the key to securing a more equal, fair, and just society. We will not remain true to our highest ideals unless we do a far better job of educating each one of our sons and daughters. We will not be able to keep the American promise of equal opportunity if we fail to provide a world-class education to every child. (p.1)

To assure the gap begins to close, it is critical that public schools produce students who graduate with the skills to be successful in the knowledge economy (Carnavale & Desrochers, 2003; College Board, 2011; Department of Education 2010a). Key areas of concern are student preparation and equity and access to CTE classes and comprehensive school counseling programs. Related are the transportability of skills and the concept of career readiness as a lifelong endeavor (ACATE 2010; Career Readiness Partner Council, 2012a; CEI-PIA, 2011; Phelps, 2002; Guidry 2012).

Student preparation. Preparation for career readiness starts at the elementary school and continue through high school (Anctil, et al., 2012; ASCA, 2012; Gysbers, 2013; Gysbers & Lapan, 2009). Preparing students to be career ready takes a multifaceted approach and encompasses a combination of behavior skills (also referred to as employability skills), technical skills, and academic/cognitive skills. These skills are complimentary and can provide a good predictor of future job performance when looked together (Career Partnership Council, 2012; Garmise, 2012; Guidry, 2012; Gysbers, 2013; Gysbers & Lapan, 2009; Savickas, 1997). All of

these skills can be developed through a comprehensive school counseling program in consort with the broader school and local community and through CTE classes (ACTE, 2010; ASCA, 2012; Garmise, 2012; Gysbers, 2013; Gysbers & Lapan, 2009).

Strength of curriculums. The CTE curriculums were perceived as less rigorous when the academic content areas began to adopt the Common Core Standards (ACTE, 2012; Garmise, 2006; Symonds, Schwartz & Ferguson, 2011; U.S. Department of Labor 1991). In a state led initiative, the National Association of State Directors of Career Technical Education Consortium (NASDCTEC) developed a Common Career Technical Core (CCTC) to establish rigorous, benchmarked standards for CTE and provide outcome standards for completers in each of the 79 career pathways within the 16 Career Clusters. Included in the CCTC, there are twelve Career Ready Practices (CRP) that span across all fields which address the knowledge, skills and attitudes they consider necessary to become career ready. The CRP have scope and sequence and may be incorporated into both academic and career courses. States may voluntarily adopt these standards (NASDCTEC, n.d.b.). Although 46 states and three territories have adopted state CTE standards, there is a significant mismatch between the state adopted standards and the CCTC (NASDCTEC, 2013). There is also need for multiple pathways that lead to and partner with post-secondary institutions to develop opportunities for dual and concurrent enrollment in college credit bearing courses. Developing these postsecondary pathways will increase rigor and provide incentive for students to enroll in CTE courses (Kantrov, 2014; Symonds et al; 2011).

Pathway plans. Preparation for career readiness takes planning and requires an outcome goal. The development of career pathway plans for every student can encourage career exploration and academic success (ACTE, 2012; NASDCTEC, n.d.a, n.d.b; Symonds, Schwartz & Ferguson, 2011). It is recommended that plans should include clear career objectives, a

program of study, degree/certificate objectives and work-linked learning experiences that can help students identify personal strengths and interests and create connections that support future career endeavors (Kantrov, 2014; Symonds et al; 2011). Symonds et al. (2011) write in regard to pathway plans, “Young adults simply can’t chart a course if they don’t have a goal” (p.28).

Assessment. There is not yet a standard accountability system (Achieve, Inc & NASDCTEC, 2014). The Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act requires states to monitor and review their CTE programs to receive funding. However, the programs are implemented locally using their state’s adopted CTE standards. States may choose what standards technical assessments they would like to use based on their own priorities and contexts (Achieve, Inc & NASDCTEC, 2014; NASECTEC, 2013). Additionally, President Obama called for new reporting standards for public schools including college enrollment and job placement rates in the Blueprint for Reform (U.S. Department of Education 2010a). At this time, approximately 50 percent of States include at least one career-focused indicator in their public reporting formulas. Only six states include comprehensive systems that place importance on both college and career readiness. (Achieve Inc & NASDCTEC, 2014). Achieve, Inc. & NASDCTEC (2014) write,

“Incorporating multiple indicators guided by critical questions, state economic/workforce priorities and context can go a long way toward states building more credible and effective systems that reflect a broad view of college and career readiness.” (p. 21).

Access to quality CTE and school counseling programs.

Access to CTE programs. Studies have shown CTE courses to have a positive effect for predictors of school success (Carbonaro, 2005; Kelly & Price, 2009). There has been a resurgence of interest in CTE programs since the Carl D. Perkins Act in 2006 was authorized. In the past five years programs have grown 60 percent and have seen an increase of almost six million

students in the past seven years. Growth is projected to continue in the next year. (Connley, 2009; Kantrov, 2014). However, resources have not been increasing in proportion to the demand (Kantrov, 2014). A national survey indicated that 73 percent of respondents reported that school budgets for CTE have flat lined or decreased in the past five years. The hardest hit areas have been equipment, professional development for CTE staff, technology, and curriculum and instructional materials (Kantrov, 2014).

Compounding the problem of access is a teacher shortage in the CTE areas. Despite recent studies supporting the success in CTE and student achievement, schools report struggling to find qualified CTE teachers (Wilkin & Nwoke, 2011). It was projected in 2009 that one third of the experienced teachers in the workforce would retire within four years, this includes CTE teachers. Moreover, CTE teacher education programs fell from 432 to 385 from 1990 to 2000, a decrease of 11 percent. (Conneely, 2009; Wilkin & Nwoke, 2011). The quality of the programs that provide alternate routes to teacher certification are also contributing to the shortage due to the perception that they not as rigorous as traditional routes (Conneely, 2009; Wilkin & Nwoke, 2011). As a result of the shortage, course enrollment options are becoming limited and student enrollment is decreasing (Conneely, 2009).

Access to CTE programs for students with disabilities and students for whom English is a second language continues to be a concern (Advocates for Children, n.d.). Physical limitations of students and the ability of the venue to safely accommodate their participation as well as access to more challenging curriculum and non-voluntary enrollment have contributed to a lack of equity (Advocates for Children, n.d.; Smith et al, 2003). Lack of bilingual CTE programs, lack of availability of language interpretation/translation and non-integration of acquisition of language skills in to CTE coursework are all barriers that prevent access to CTE program to

students who are English Language Learners (Advocates for Children, n.d.; Smith et al., 2003).

For both populations collaboration between CTE teachers and other services providers within the school such as case managers, and ELL instructors is critical to helping these students access CTE programs (Advocates for Children, n.d.; Smith et al, 2003).

Access to school counseling programs. Strong college and career counseling in schools is an effective means of improving college and career readiness (ACTE, 2012; Blackhurst, Auger & Wahl, 2003; Carey & Harrington, 2010a, 2010b; Dahir, Burnham & Stone, 2009; Lapan, Gysbers & Sun, 1997; Lapan, Whitcomb & Aleman, 2012; Peterson, Long & Billups, 1999; Symonds et al., 2011; Wilkerson et al., 2013; Whiston, et al., 2003). When comprehensive school counseling programs are in place, proficiency in English Language Arts and Math rate are significantly higher (Carey & Harrington, 2010a, 2010b; Wilkerson et al., 2013). These content areas are considered most related to career readiness (ACTE, 2010; Conley, 2012; Conforti, 2013; Guidry, 2012; National Association or State Directors of Career Technical Education Consortium (NASDCTEC), n.d.a, n.d.c; National Governors Association Center for Best Practices 2010; U.S. Department of Labor, 1991). Further, scores on the state Perkins Assessments that measure technical proficiency for pathway completers in a craft area have been shown to improve when comprehensive school counseling programs are implemented (Carey & Harrington, 2010a, 2010b). Access to college and career counseling services provided by school counselors has also been linked to decreases in suspensions, improved attendance, and higher graduation rates (Lapan et al., 2012; Lapan et al., 1997). Currently only 24 states have legislation mandating K-12 school counseling programs and five states mandating school counseling programs in grades 9-12 (ASCA, 2014b).

Positive outcomes have been correlated to the counselor to student ratio. ASCA (2012) recommends a counselor to student ratio of 1:250 for maximum effectiveness. The literature suggests that as ratios increase, the school counselors' ability to build relationships that foster student achievement diminishes (Carey & Harrington, 2010a, 2010b; Lapan et al., 2012). Unfavorable ratios place the school counselor in a more reactive role, rather than proactive as prescribed by the ASCA national model (Hines, Lemons & Crews, 2011). The average school counselor to student ratio in the U.S. is reported at 1: 471 (ASCA 2014a; College Board 2012a). Seventeen states have mandated minimum school counselor-to-student ratios that vary greatly from 1: 250 in Maine to 1:675 in Georgia. At the elementary level ratios mandated are as high as 1:800 such as in South Carolina (ASCA, 2014). Furthermore, schools that qualify for Title I funds report an average of 69 more students per counselor than their counterparts (College Board 2012a) indicating that there is inequity in the ability of students from lower socio-economic background or from schools with lower levels of per pupil funding exists to access to the benefits of school counseling services (Lapan et al., 2012). Phelps (2002) and The College Board (2011) reported that a shortage of highly qualified school counselors may be a contributing factor to the large student-to counselor ratios and the quality of services received by students.

Impacting access to school counselors is the amount of time spent on duties that are considered unrelated to the scope and sequence of the comprehensive school counseling program (Lapan et al., 2012). ASCA (2012) indicated that 80 percent of a school counselor's time should be spent delivering direct or indirect services to students. However, a study of school counselors in Connecticut indicated that between 15 and 50 percent of their daily work time was spent completing non-counseling related tasks (Lapan et al., 2012) and nationally 80 percent of counselors include non-counseling related tasks as a large part of their day (College Board

2012a). Despite the mounting evidence that comprehensive school counseling programs increase student achievement, The College Board (2012) also indicated that 20 percent of high school and 11 percent of middle school administrators would reallocate time in the work day to increase the amount of time school counselors spent on administrative tasks.

Career readiness as a life-long endeavor. Compounding the challenge of creating a career ready workforce at the secondary level is the concept that career readiness is a lifelong endeavor; it has no endpoint (ASCA, 2014; Career Readiness Partner Council, 2012a; Gysbers, 2013; Gysbers & Lapan, 2009; Perosa & Perosa, 1987; Phillips & Blustein, 1994; Savickas, 1994; Super, 1980). Life experiences such as job loss, disabling accidents, or voluntary redirection can cause a once career ready person to have to replan or retrain (Gysbers, 2013; Perosa & Perosa, 1987; Phillips & Blustein, 1994; Super, 1980). Career decision making, particularly with children and adolescents must be looked at in terms of psychosocial development. Allowing students to experience career exploration activities via groups, lessons, goal setting and hands on experiences that are developmentally appropriate can guide them to construct a personal identity that encompasses career interests (Emmett, 1997; Gysbers, 2013; Knight, 2014; Phillips & Blustein, 1994). However, expecting children to commit to a career choice by the end of high school is a challenging notion when 80 percent of college students in the United States change their majors at least once and an average of three times (Ramos, 2013).

Transportability of skills. Transportability of skills is an additional factor that contributes to the challenge of creating and maintaining a career ready work force. These skills are specific to a particular job and not transferrable across occupations and tend to lead to certifications or licensures (Guidry, 2012). Guidry estimated that there are nearly 700,000 credentialing possibilities available including licensure, certificate and certification programs.

These programs are not grounded by a universal knowledge base or skill set and as a result, resources cannot be aligned to address gaps in skills (Guidry, 2012). Garmise (2006) argued for the need to develop clearly articulated skill standards. Creating recognizable and transportable skills through standards can assist persons seeking employment and help employers manage current labor needs and to better predict needs for the future. Garmise (2006) asserted that without these standards both businesses and individuals struggle to navigate the labor market. The CCTC was developed to begin to address this concern (NASECTEC, 2013).

On the surface the transportability of skills appears to be a post-training concern but the foundation for such skills is laid at the secondary level (Garmise, 2006). Skills standards refer to competencies required on the job. They assume that employees are equipped with the fundamental academic skills (i.e., Common Core) that provide the basis for acquiring a more demanding career related skill set (Career Readiness Partner Council , 2012a; Garmise, 2006 ;Guidry, 2012; National Governors Association Center for Best Practices 2010).

Transportability then becomes an equity issue when schools do not invest in students as human capital by providing a quality education that emphasizes math, reading, writing and speaking/listening (Achieve, Inc.; 2012; Career Readiness Partner Council, 2012a; Carnavale & Desrochers, 2003; College Board, 2011; Garmise, 2006; Guidry, 2012; National Governors Association Center for Best Practices 2010; U.S. Department of Education, 2010a, 2010b, n.d.c).

Counselor Role in Career Readiness

School counselors are in the unique position to lead the career readiness initiative through the delivery of a comprehensive school counseling program (College Board, 2012a, 2012b; Hines et al., 2011). They are specifically trained to help students acquire the skills necessary for career exploration and life plan development (CACREP, 2009; Wittmer, 2000).

ASCA (2012) has provided a national model from which school counselors can build their comprehensive school counseling programs. It is comprised of four components: foundation, delivery, management and accountability. The model is executed through leadership, advocacy, collaboration and systemic change (2012). The National Model is grounded in three domains: academic, personal/social and career, and provides student standards for achievement in each (2012). Skills vital to career readiness fall within the career and personal/social domains. The contents of these domains align with all twelve Career Ready Practices in the CCTC (ACTE, 2012).

Through the College Board, The National Office of School Counselor Advocacy (NOSCA) has identified eight components of college and career readiness that school counselors can use to integrate college and career readiness into their programs (College Board, 2012a). The competencies include: College aspirations, academic planning for college and career, enrichment and extracurricular engagement, college and career exploration and selection process, college affordability planning, college and career admissions process and college and career assessments. Guides are in place at the elementary, middle and high school levels to help school counselors address the components at varying levels of development for students in grades K-12 (College Board, 2012a).

Evidence exists that indicates students are more career ready when comprehensive school counseling programs are in place and that students reap other benefits from receiving college and career counseling services including a decrease in suspension rates, improved attendance, and higher graduation rates (ACTE, 2012; Blackhurst et al., 2003; Dahir et al. 2009; Lapan et al., 1997; Lapan et al., 2012; Peterson et al., 1999; Symonds et al., 2011; Wilkerson et al., 2013; Whiston, et al., 2003). Graduate students in school counseling programs are placing importance

on career development (Anctil, Klose-Smith, Schenck & Dahir, 2012). The *2012 National Survey of School Counselors* published by NOSCA indicated that counselors have the confidence, knowledge and skills to lead the way to career readiness and are willing to do so (ACTE, 2012; College Board, 2012b). Despite the mounting evidence, school counselors encounter barriers that inhibit them from taking the lead in the career ready initiative.

Hines et al. (2011) cite three major impediments that must be addressed to for school counselors to take the lead in preparing students to be career ready. These include: inadequate pre-service training in college and career readiness; lack of appropriate hiring, supervision, and evaluation practices by administrators, and a discrepancy between the role of the school counselor in practice and in theory. Similar findings by the College Board (2011, 2012a, 2012b), Pérusse et al. (2001), and Pérusse & Goodnough (2005) corroborate their recommendations.

School Counselor Preparation

Pre-service training occurs at the graduate level and is geared toward meeting certification and licensure requirements which are set by each state (College Board, 2011). Typically, programs include a combination of academic work and a practicum or internship that is supervised clinical work. Required hours for practicum and/or internship range from 200 to 700 hours (College Board, 2011). Counseling programs that are accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) are required to include eight common core areas, one of which is career development (CACREP, 2009). These components provide a framework for what specific skills and knowledge should included in counseling curriculum but do not delineate how the training institutions should structure the content or incorporate the experiences into the greater counseling program (Pérusse et al.,

2001a). CACREP Standards state that the minimum requirement for training should be no less than two years or 48 semester hours or 72 quarter hours (Wittmer, 2000).

The National Career Development Association (NCDA) (2009) has also put forth a set of career counseling competencies meant to represent the minimum level of knowledge and skills that a professional career counselor working in the field with a masters' degree or higher should possess. They propose standards in eleven areas: career development theory, individual and group counseling skills, individual and group counseling assessment, information/resources, program promotion/management and implementation, coaching/consultation and performance improvement, diverse populations, supervision, ethical/legal issues, research/evaluation, and technology. These competencies are similar to the CACREP (2009) Standards for career counseling and have companion performance indicators to illustrate what exactly the counselor should know, understand, and be able to do. The NCDA (2009) includes competences for integrating the use of technology to assist individuals with career planning whereas CACREP (2009) does not. Like CACREP, the NCDA (2009) does not specify how the competencies should be represented in the curricular experience. The NCDA (2009) does note that, "The Career Counseling Competency Statements can serve as a guide for career counseling training programs or as a checklist for persons wanting to acquire or to enhance their skills in career counseling" (p. 1).

Leaders within the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) recommend that counselors should have special training in counseling theory and skills related to school settings (Wittmer, 2000). ASCA cites topics in this realm to include: personality and human development theories, research, career and life-skills development, learning theories, the helping process, facilitative skills, group dynamic and group process, approaches to appraisal, curriculum

development, multi-cultural and community awareness, professional ethics, program planning, management and evaluation (College Board, 2011; Wittmer, 2000). The areas are aligned with CACREP (2009) Standards.

According to the College Board (2012b), there is a strong correlation between the preparation of the school counselor and their students' outcomes. Among the most highly educated professionals in school districts nationally, approximately 83 percent hold master's degrees. Despite all of the advanced training, counselors report being ill-prepared in the area of career counseling.

Echoing the claims made by the world of business that college graduates are not career ready (Achieve, Inc, 2012; Chegg, 2013; University of Washington Career Center, 2006), school counselors have indicated that they are not being adequately prepared in the area of career counseling (College Board, 2012b). Only 10 percent of counselors surveyed reported that they feel that they have had adequate training to prepare them for the job (College Board, 2012b). Moreover, only 52 percent of high school counselors and 46 percent of middle school counselors indicated that they were prepared to implement career readiness interventions (College Board, 2012b). Anderson (1998) and Hines et al. (2011) substantiate counselor concerns with their findings that many pre-service training programs for counselors do not equip school counselors with the skills and attitudes necessary address college and career readiness, but rather focus on individual therapy and intervention.

In a national study of programs that offer counselor preparation, Pérusse et al. (2001a) found that most programs do have a common set of core curriculum offered across counseling programs including career counseling, but few offered specialized coursework specifically for school counselors. More recently, Perusse, Poynton, Parzych and Goodnough (Fall, 2015)

identified 115 school counselor preparation programs that offered career and lifestyle development counseling as a required course, but only 42 programs had career and lifestyle development courses designed specifically for school counseling students. Additionally, courses in career counseling do not modify coursework to account for elementary age students, whose developmental needs and concept of the future are quite different than those of children in middle or high school (Emmett, 1997; Knight 2014).

Pérusse, Goodnough and Noël (2001b) found that only one third of counselor educators were using the ASCA National Standards in a moderate or extensive way. Where use was reported, there was no consistency across programs. The Standards form the foundation for the ASCA National Model and illustrate student learning outcomes in each area as a result of participating in a school counseling program. They were designed to promote more consistent practice nationally (Anctil et al., 2012; Pérusse et al., 2001b).

There is a limited body of research that examines what constitutes counselor preparation in the area of career counseling and the effectiveness of the curricular experiences (College Board, 2011; Lara, Kline & Paulson, 2011; Lewis & Coursol, 2007). Notwithstanding, there have been many suggestions for program improvement. Emmett (1997) and Knight (2014) suggested that counselor training programs should differentiate course curricula to account for work with elementary aged students. Pérusse et al. (2001a) and the College Board (2011) note that both hiring counselor educators that have recent prior work experience as school counselors and collaborating with school districts or developing partnerships with practicing counselors will help keep faculty abreast of current trends in the field. By doing so, counselor educators can better relate and relay to trainees a more realistic picture of what to expect on the job. The College Board (2012b) suggested that graduate schools should parse career readiness from

college readiness curricula and create two separate courses. Furthermore, they suggested that CACREP include college and career outcome measures as a mandatory part of pre-service training. Suggestions have also been made to include training on related technology and tech trends for career counseling into the program and to incorporate more real world experiences such as career center internships, advanced career practicum, job shadowing and networking events to allow pre-service school counselors to learn more practical information about careers in various fields (Anderson, 1998; Larrabee & Blanton, 1999; Lewis & Coursol, 2007; Stevens & Lundberg, 1998; Thornburg, 2002; University of Washington Career Center, 2002; Warnke, 1996). A concern widely voiced is that many pre-service programs do not align with 21st century projections for counseling field (College Board, 2011).

According to Thornburg (2002), the challenge that counselors face working in the career domain is complex. Counselors must:

- prepare students for a future where jobs that currently exist may no longer be around by the time they finish high school based on the pace of technological advances,
- instill the foundational skills,
- teach resiliency and how to repack and develop new skills to fit the needs of a job market that is constantly changing.

The ability to fulfill this challenge rests on the quality of pre-service training that school counselors receive in the area of career counseling.

Chapter III

Methods

Research Questions

In this study, skills and concepts that are critical to the successful preparation of school counselors in the area of career counseling and the implications on career readiness as perceived by counselor educators who are experts in the field of career counseling were identified. The following questions were addressed:

1. How are school counseling students prepared to conduct career counseling in grades K-12?
2. What key concepts, attitudes, and/or skills do you believe are necessary for school counselors to promote career readiness?
3. In what ways do you or does your program teach school counseling students to use data to show they are effectively promoting career readiness with their K-12 students?

Method

A mixed method technique was used to determine the implications that content taught by counselor educators in career counseling curricula has on career readiness. A Delphi study was conducted to gather data from experts in the field. The Delphi technique is a series of questionnaires used to garner a reliable consensus among a group of experts (Powell, 2003; Linstone & Turoff, 1975). Information from each round is used to provide controlled feedback the help with consensus building (Powell, 2003). Furthermore, it can be used to structure and receive group feedback without a physical meeting, can cut costs and provide a safe forum to gather opinions without direct confrontation between participants with opposing views (Delbecq, Van de Ven & Gustafson, 1975; Hsu & Sanford, 2007; Powell, 2003; Skulmoski, Hartman &

Krahn (2007); Tran, 2013; University of Washington 2007). Delbeq et al. (1975) indicated that the Delphi technique is useful in the following instances:

1. To determine or develop a range of program alternatives;
2. To investigate or refine fundamental assumptions or information leading to different judgments;
3. To solicit information from a respondent group that may generate a consensus;
4. To correlate expert judgments on a topic which covers a wide range of disciplines
5. To educate the respondent group to the diverse and interrelated aspects of the topic (p.11).

The Delphi technique does have several limitations. Woudenberg (1991), notes that it is often difficult to evaluate the accuracy and reliability of a judgment. As a result, outcomes cannot be equated to measurement. Furthermore, each application is both person and situation specific and therefore creates room for bias to occur (Powell, 2003; Woudenberg, 1991). Additionally, the technique forces a middle consensus (Hanafin, 2004; Tran, 2013). However, the issues of reliability and accuracy using the Delphi technique in a quantitative manner do not also occur in more qualitative uses (Woudenberg, 1991). Studies have indicated that both credibility and validity may be ensured by attending to goodness criteria. Such criteria for credibility include: inclusion of a clear decision trail that provides the rationale to address issues such as identification of panel members, appropriateness of the method in answering the research question, justification of consensus levels and means of dissemination/implementation of the questionnaire (Fink, Kosecoff, Chassin & Brook, 1991; Hanafin, 2004; Powell, 2003). Goodness criteria for validity may include, comparing the feedback from participants against a randomized controlled trial (RCT) which is unknown to the participants. This is considered the gold standard.

Other acceptable suggestions include comparing findings against data from other sources, checking data internally to assure consistency (Powell, 2003).

Participants

Nworie (2011) indicated that one of the most important factors in designing a Delphi study is the identification of expert panelists. He defined expert panelists as professionals who are experienced and who can provide an educated view or expert opinion of the issue(s) being studied. It is critical that the expert be knowledgeable in their field or on the issue being addressed because this method relies on their opinion to form consensus and inform the community of practice. Skulmoski et al. (2007) added that participants must also have sufficient time to participate, have the capacity and be willing to participate, and have effective communication skills.

In this study, the participants consisted of counselor educators who teach career counseling and have been identified as experts based on their involvement and service to the field of career counseling. Expertise was established in one of two ways. Participants were either identified through the National Association of Career Development as active contributors to the field, or they may have served on the editing board for a peer reviewed journal regarding career counseling. Counselor educators were selected for this study because the job reality for graduate students in these programs places them directly in the midst of regularly working with clients and students on career readiness (CACREP, 2009; ASCA, 2012).

No consensus has formed on the optimal number of experts needed for a valid Delphi study in the literature, though a common theme seems to be 10-50 participants (Delbecq et al., 1975; Hanafin, 2004; Hsu & Sanford, 2007; Skulmolski et al., 2007). According to Nworie (2011), the number of experts required is not the primary factor that influences how successful

the use of the method will be. Instead, Nworie (2011) stated that success “rests more on the group dynamics than on statistical power” (p.26).

Procedure

An expert sample of 50 counselor educators was invited to participate in this Delphi study. Invitations were delivered via email on January 10, 2015 (See Appendix A). Recruited members were provided with a Participant Recruitment Letter (see Appendix B), and the IRB approved information sheet (see Appendix C) explaining the particulars of the study and the associated benefits. The email also included a link to the informed consent questionnaire (see Appendix D). Invited experts who chose to participate were asked to provide a preferred email address to be used for the purpose of delivering survey information. Experts who chose not to participate were asked to give their names so that they could be removed from the contact list. Low response rates to the initial invitation prompted two more reminders to the invited experts to complete the informed consent (Hsu & Sanford, 2007b). The total number of experts willing to participate was 17. The recruitment period lasted approximately four weeks.

Round One

The 17 experts who confirmed participation were asked to respond to a survey that was created using Google Docs. The link to the survey was emailed on February 9, 2015 to the address indicated in the informed consent (see Appendices E and F for email and survey). The survey contained the following questions:

In thinking about the school counseling students who are in career counseling class either taught by you or within your program, please answer the following questions.

1. How are school counseling students prepared to conduct career counseling in grades K-12?

2. What key concepts, attitudes, and/or skills do you believe are necessary for school counselors to promote career readiness?
3. In what ways do you or does your program teach school counseling students to use data to show they are effectively promoting career readiness with their K-12 students?

Participants were also asked to complete a brief demographic questionnaire. They were given six (6) days to respond to round one. At the close of the survey, seven participants responded. Consideration was given to both sending additional reminders and extending the completion deadline (Hsu & Sanford, 2007b). However, these options were dismissed because there was concern that the rate of attrition would increase by further delaying the study. Moreover, the quality of a Delphi study has been shown to increase as the time between completing a questionnaire and receiving the next round decreases (Hanafin, 2004).

Data from the first round was sorted into 12 Career Ready Practices (CRP) as defined by the National Association of State Directors of Career Technical Education Consortium (n.d.b.) (see Appendix G) as a cross check to assure the items suggested by the experts addressed items pre-service counselors would need to know to assist students in becoming career ready (Powell, 2003). The Career Ready Practices were chosen for three reasons:

- They span across all fields and address the knowledge, skills and attitudes considered necessary to become career ready (ACTE, 2012; NASDCTEC, n.d.b),
- They are linked to the Common Career Technical Core (CCTC) which is a set of rigorous, benchmarked curricular standards for CTE that provide outcome standards for completers in each of the 79 career pathways within the 16 Career Clusters. (NASDCTEC, n.d.b),

- All twelve CRP in the CCTC directly align with the contents of the three domains in the ASCA National Model (ACTE, 2012).

All but 8 unique items in round one fit into one of the 12 CRP. The items that did not fit pertained to role of the school counselor, resources, or required courses. This is to be expected as the CRP are student outcomes. Ten out of 12 practices were represented. Information garnered from this round was used to construct a survey instrument for the second round. A seven point Likert-type scale was used to rate agreement levels with each item in the survey (Jenkins & Smith, 1994).

Round Two

The round two survey invitations were sent to the 17 identified and confirmed experts via email (See Appendix H). The communication included a summary of responses from round one and a survey instrument generated from the responses received (See Appendix I). This survey was created in Google Docs and was e-mailed on March 4, 2015. The experts were given six (6) days to respond.

The survey items summarized the expert responses to each of the three research questions received in round one. Experts were asked to rate their level of agreement with the responses generated in round one on a scale of one (strongly disagree) to seven (strongly agree). This round also allowed participants to add, reject, modify or clarify responses from round one.

Round Three

Participant responses from round two were summarized and a survey instrument was created using Google Docs from the responses to each of the initial research questions that had not yet reached consensus (see Appendix J). There is no common definition for when a consensus is considered achieved in the literature. The percentage of agreement has ranged from

as high as 100 percent to as low as 55 percent (Powell, 2003). Rather than delineate a percentage, it has been suggested that measuring the constancy of participant responses in successive rounds is a more reliable alternative (Hsu & Sanford, 2007). This study applied the methodology of Jenkins & Smith (1994) to determine when consensus was reached. Therefore, two criteria were met: Median scores must be between six and seven on a Likert-type scale and interquartile range scores are less than or equal to 1.5 for each item. Measures of central tendency and level of dispersion are used to describe data that has been obtained from collective judgment techniques because they best reflect a convergence of opinion when the norm is skewed and there is a small sample size. These non-parametric measures, particularly the median, help control for the influence of extreme outliers (Hsu & Sanford, 2007; Jenkins & Smith, 1994).

Invitations to round three were sent via email on March 19, 2015 to the 17 confirmed expert participants (See Appendix K). A summary report was included along with the next survey round. In this iteration, participants were asked to rate the items that had not yet reached consensus on a scale of one (strongly disagree) to seven (strongly agree). This time, the interquartile range and the median score were included for each item. Experts were asked to provide further explanation for items where they rated themselves outside the consensus (Hsu & Sanford, 2007). Participants were given six (6) days to complete the survey.

Chapter IV

Results

Participant Demographics

Fifty counselor educators in the area of career counseling were specifically invited to participate as experts and 34% (n=17) initially confirmed agreement to participate in the study. Forty-one percent (n=7) of the 17 confirmed participants engaged in round one of the study. Delphi methodology does not call for representativeness of the sample for statistical purposes; rather it suggests that the representativeness must come from the quality of the experts (Powell, 2003). Six of the responding experts were identified as such based on their past or present involvement on an editorial board for peer reviewed journal in the field of career counseling. The seventh confirmed expert was identified through the National Association of Career Development as an active contributor to the field. Despite the small sample size, the demographic information revealed that the expert panelists represented a wide range of backgrounds. The seven experts who completed round one represented four different geographical locations across the U.S. and the level of experience in teaching at the post-secondary level ranged from 0-20 years. They represented both public and private institutions. Three of the seven schools were CACREP accredited, one was in the process of seeking MCAC accreditation and two were not accredited. Participants were also asked about the make-up of the career counseling course taken by counselors within their programs. Three of the seven participants indicated that there was a separate course specific to school counselors. The remainder responded that the course was taken together with all students seeking a degree in counseling regardless of specialization (see Table 1).

There were five participants in round two (10% of the original invited experts). Six experts completed the round three questionnaire (12 % of the original invited experts). Because of the anonymous nature of Delphi methodology, it was impossible to identify which experts completed the entire study from the seven experts who responded in round one. The demographic information is inclusive of all experts who completed round one.

Table 1

Participant Demographics

Variable	N	%
<u>Qualification as Expert</u>		
Editing Board of Journal	6	85.8
Identified by NCDA	1	14.2
Total	7	100.0
<u>Gender</u>		
Male	2	28.6
Female	5	71.4
<u>Years Teaching</u>		
0-5	2	28.6
6-10	1	14.2
11-15	2	28.6
16-20	2	28.6
<u>Geographical Region</u>		
Northeast	2	28.6
Southeast	2	28.6

Midwest	2	28.6
Non-Contiguous U.S.	1	14.2
<u>Type of Institution</u>		
Public	3	42.8
Private	4	57.2
<u>Program Accreditation</u>		
CACREP	4	57.2
In Process (MCAC)	1	14.2
Not Nationally Accredited	2	28.6
<u>Make up of Career Course</u>		
School Counselors Only	3	42.8
All Counseling Students	4	57.2

Round One Results

In round one of the Delphi study, experts were asked, “In thinking about the school counseling students who are in a career counseling class either taught by you or within your program, please answer the following questions:

1. How are school counseling students prepared to conduct career counseling in grades K-12?
2. What key concepts, attitudes, and/or skills do you believe are necessary for school counselors to promote career readiness?
3. In what ways do you or does your program teach school counseling students to use data to show they are effectively promoting career readiness with their K-12 students?”

The career counseling experts generated 125 items they deemed important to teaching career counseling, promoting career readiness, and measuring success of interventions targeted at career readiness to pre-service counselors. All items were reviewed for redundancy and compared to the CRP (NASDCTEC, n.d.b) to assure the items suggested fit our model (Powell, 2003) by two raters. Sixty-nine unique items were identified from the original 125 items. Cohen's Kappa was used to calculate the inter-rater reliability for items reviewed ($k=.971$). Cohen's Kappa is a measure of the reliability of the agreement between two raters that factors out chance agreement (Zaiontz, 2014). A Kappa value equal to 1 implies perfect agreement whereas a value of 0 implies no agreement. Values equaling .80 and higher are considered to be very good levels of agreement (Zaiontz, 2014). All but eight of the 69 unique items in round one fit in to one of the 12 CRP. The items that did not fit pertained specifically to the role of the school counselor, resources or required courses. The CRP are action oriented student outcomes. The aforementioned items not included were either recommendations for specific courses or beliefs regarding the values of school counselors. Ten out of 12 CRP were represented. Two items relating to practicum and internship were removed due to lack of clarity. Sixty-nine items were used to create the round two survey (see Appendix I). Thirteen themes emerged from the data inclusive of all three rounds (see Table 2).

- a.) Career/Counseling theories and use of scholarly articles (11 items)
- b.) Assessment (4 items)
- c.) Practical experience (5 items)
- d.) Development of curriculum (3 items)
- e.) Creating interventions (4 items)
- f.) Integration of career theory into general counseling (3 items)

- h.) Use and evaluation of career resources (5 items)
- i.) Knowledge of Standards (i.e., ASCA, NCDA, Ethical, etc. 5 items)
- j.) Influences (i.e., multiculturalism, role of work, systems, etc. 7 items)
- k.) Types of assignments given to reinforce learning (5 items)
- l.) Role of the School Counselor (5 items)
- m.) Required courses (7 items)
- n.) Course work related to data collection (5 items)

Table 2

Emerging Themes as Aligned with NASDCTEC 12 Career Ready Practices by Research Question

Themes	Examples	NASDCTEC Career Ready Practices
<p>Q1. In thinking about school counseling students who are in career counseling courses either taught by you or within your program, please answer the following question. How are school counseling students prepared to conduct career counseling in grades K-12?</p>		
Theory	<p>Non-specific Super Holland Krumboltz SCCT Narrative Read relevant empirical studies from career focused peer reviewed journals</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply appropriate academic and technical skills
Assessment	<p>Become familiar with Interpret Use results to plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employ valid and reliable research strategies • Plan education and career path aligned to personal goals
Practical Experience	<p>Practica/ Internship Simulations Service Learning Case Studies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply appropriate academic and technical skills

Develop Curriculum	Grade/Age appropriate Specific to Career Not specific to career but can choose it	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan education and career path aligned to personal goals
Influences	Study implications of Multicultural society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider the environmental, social and economic impacts of decisions
Integration of Career Counseling	Overlap between career & personal counseling Integrating career counseling theory in to personal theoretical orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate Creativity and Innovation
Resources	OOH Labor Market Info Technology related tools, i.e., Naviance, Kuder General use /eval of resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use technology to enhance productivity
Type of Assignment	Online discussion Portfolio development Track personal career path Persuasive writing i.e. argue to include career services in schools Research papers- i.e., needs of target population in career counseling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate clearly and effectively
Intervention	Planning Career Dev Developing Career Dev Programming Organization of Career Dev Learn best practices in intervention Understands Portfolio Dev	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan education and career path aligned to personal goals
Required Courses	Take MS level career course Career Counseling taught in general- examples from different fields of students in class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A

Standards	Use of NCDA Guidelines Use of ASCA Mindsets and Behaviors for College and Career Readiness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Model integrity, ethical leadership and effective management • Act as a responsible and contributing citizen and Employee
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Q2. What key concepts, attitudes, and/or skills do you believe are necessary for school counselors to promote career readiness?

Theory	Life-span Life-space includes elementary & beyond HS Foundational theories and related literature to understand and guide career development activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply appropriate academic and technical skills
Assessment	Familiar with measures across career related domains (interests, values, skills, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employ valid and reliable research strategies
Integrating Career Counseling	Understands links between career development, readiness, and mental health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate creativity and innovation
Resources	Grants available (MS Kids 2 College, HS Access)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A
Standards	ASCA Standards ASCA Mindsets and Behaviors Ethical Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Model integrity, ethical leadership and effective management • Act as a responsible and contributing citizen and employee

<p>Influences</p>	<p>Systemic (attitudes, generational effects, career aspirations, school influences, etc.) What kids see in terms of world of work (parents, own beliefs of coping with work, etc.) Not all people work for the same reasons Not all people have the benefit of choosing a best match Aware of changing work in 21st century Recognize, understand and articulate factors that shape career development and impact career interventions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider the environmental, social and economic impacts of decisions
<p>Role of School Counselor</p>	<p>Understand importance of Career Dev and Career Ed Promoting career readiness is one of the main jobs All students should have awareness, knowledge and skills from K-12 Interrelationship between career and college readiness Ease of incorporating career counseling into all aspects of school counseling</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A
<p>Intervention</p>	<p>Intervention models/strategies and how to apply in a developmentally appropriate way Decision making skills as a component of career readiness</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilize critical thinking to make sense of problems and persevere in solving them • Plan education and career path aligned to personal goals • Communicate clearly, effectively and with reason
<p>Practical Experiences</p>	<p>Can't rely on internship or practicum supervisor to teach career counseling This is where school counseling students get</p>	<p>Apply appropriate academic and technical skills</p>

practice doing career counseling

Q3. In what ways do you or does your program teach school counseling students to use data to show they are effectively promoting career readiness with their K-12 students?

Required Courses	Methods Research Program Evaluation Assessment Intro to School Counseling Embedded in all courses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employ valid and reliable research strategies
Course Work Related to Data	Practicum Internship Develop Comprehensive School Counseling Program/ASCA Model Design goals for measure and discuss them	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply appropriate academic and technical skills • Demonstrate creativity and innovation

Round Two Results

Items generated in round one were used to create the survey instrument in round two. The instrument was divided into three parts; Part A= Instructional Practices (research question one), Part B=Skills and Concepts that Promote Career Readiness (research question two), and Part C= Methods/Venues Used to Teach Data Collection Relating to Career Readiness (research question 3). Each item on the instrument was accompanied by a seven-point Likert-type scale. Experts were asked rate each item for their level of agreement using the following intervals:

- 1= Strongly disagree
- 2= Disagree
- 3= Slightly Disagree
- 4= Neither Agree nor Disagree
- 5= Slightly Agree

6= Agree

7=Strongly Agree

Experts were not required to respond to every item and they were given the opportunity to add, reject, modify or clarify responses from round one at the end of the survey.

Five of the seventeen confirmed experts (29.4%) submitted responses for round two. Using the methodology for analysis suggested by Jenkins and Smith (1994), the median score and interquartile ranges were calculated for each item in the survey. To determine if consensus was reached in a Delphi study, two criteria must be met:

1. Median scores must be between six and seven on a Likert-type scale;
2. Interquartile range scores are less than or equal to 1.5 for each item.

Measures of central tendency and level of dispersion are used to describe data that has been obtained from collective judgment techniques because they best reflect a convergence of opinion when the norm is skewed and there is a small sample size. These non-parametric measures, particularly the median, help control for the influence of extreme outliers (Hsu & Sanford, 2007; Jenkins & Smith, 1994). In round two, 56.7% of the items representing research question one (instructional practices) (see Table 3) and 91.3% of the items relating to research question two (skills/concepts that promote career readiness) (see Table 4) reached consensus. Consensus was reached for 44.4% of the items pertaining to question three (methods/venues used to teach data collection relating to career readiness) (see Table 5).

Table 3

Instructional Practices Necessary to Prepare School Counselors to Conduct Career Counseling in Grades K-12: Question One -Round Two Results

Item	Median	Interquartile Range	Consensus Achieved
A school counselor prepared to conduct career counseling in grades K-12...			
1. understands theories of career counseling in general	7	1.5	Yes
2. understands Super's Life Span Life Space Theory	6	2	No
3. understands Holland's Theory of Career Choice	6	1	Yes
4. understands Krumboltz Learning Theory of Career Counseling and Happenstance	5	2	No
5. understands Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT)	7	1	Yes
6. understands the narrative approach to career counseling	7	3.5	No
7. reads relevant empirical studies from career focused peer reviewed journals	6	2.4	No
8. is familiar with assessment	6	1.5	Yes
9. is able to interpret assessment results	7	1	Yes
10. is able to use results to plan Interventions	7	1	Yes
11. has participated in career counseling simulations	7	1	Yes
12. has participated in service learning in a career setting	4	3.5	No

13. has participated in reviewing case studies	7	.5	Yes
14. can develop grade/age appropriate curriculum specific to career exploration/development	7	1	Yes
15. can develop curriculum in general	7	.5	Yes
16. knows how to use the Occupational Outlook Handbook (OOH)	6	2.5	No
17. is aware of labor market information	7	2.5	No
18. knows how to use technology related career tools (i.e., Naviance, Kuder, etc.)	6	1.5	Yes
19. has general knowledge of use and evaluation of resources	6	1	Yes
20. has participated in online discussion as part of their career counseling class	4	4	No
21. has knowledge of portfolio development	5	3	No
22. has developed a portfolio	4	2	No
23. has tracked their own personal career path	7	1.5	Yes
24. can write persuasively	5	1	No
25. can write a research paper	5	1.5	No
26. understands how to plan for career development	7	0	Yes
27. understands how to design career development programming	7	.75	Yes
28. understands the organization of career development	5	2.5	No

29. understand best practices in Intervention	7	1	Yes
30. has taken a MS level career course	7	0	Yes
31. has taken a general career counseling course that uses examples from different fields	7	2	No
32. has taken a career course specific to school counseling	6	3	No
33. has knowledge of National Career Development Association (NCDA) Guidelines	3	4.5	No
34. has knowledge of American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Mindsets and Behaviors for College and Career Readiness	7	1	Yes
35. has studied the implications of multicultural counseling	7	1.5	Yes
36. understands the overlap between career counseling and personal counseling	7	1	Yes
37. is able to integrate career theory into personal theoretical orientation	7	1.5	Yes

Table 4

*Skills and Concepts Necessary to Promote Career Readiness: Question Two
Round Two Results*

Item	Median	Interquartile Range	Consensus Achieved
To be able to promote career readiness, school counselors....			
1. understand links between career development, readiness and mental health	7	0	Yes
2. are aware of grants available (i.e., MS Kids 2 College, HS Access Grants)	5	2.5	No
3. have knowledge of ASCA Standards	7	1	Yes
4. have knowledge of the ASCA Mindsets and Behaviors for College and Career Readiness	7	1	Yes
5. have knowledge of ethical standards	7	1	Yes
6. understand that not all people work for the same reasons	7	1	Yes
7. understand that not all people have the benefit of choosing a best career match	7	1	Yes
8. be aware of changing work/workforce in the 21st Century	7	1	Yes
9. understand the importance of career development and career education	7	1	Yes
10. understand that promoting career readiness is one of their main jobs	7	1.5	Yes
11. believe that all students should have career awareness, knowledge and	7	1	Yes

skills from K-12

12.	understand the ease of incorporating career counseling into all aspects of school counseling	7	0	Yes
13.	recognize, understand and articulate factors that shape career development and impact career intervention	6	1.5	Yes
14.	understand foundational theories and literature related to career development	7	2	No
15.	are able to understand and guide career development activities using foundational theories	6	2.5	No
16.	have knowledge of intervention models/strategies and how to apply them in a developmentally appropriate way	7	1	Yes
17.	understand the interrelationship between college and career readiness	7	1.5	Yes
18.	can rely on internship or practicum supervisor to teach career counseling	3	3.5	No
19.	get practice doing career counseling in internship or practicum	6	1.5	Yes
20.	understand that career development does not just occur in high school, but includes the elementary grades and beyond high school	7	1.0	Yes
21.	are familiar with measures across career development related domains (i.e., interests, skills, values, etc.)	7	1.5	Yes
22.	have knowledge of the systemic influences that effect careers (i.e., generational effects, career	7	1	Yes

aspirations, school influences, etc.)

23. understand that what kids observe in terms of the world of work make an impression (i.e., parents, own beliefs about coping with work, etc.)	7	0	Yes
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Table 5

Methods/Venues Used to Teach Data Collection Relating to Career Readiness: Question Three Round Two Results

Item	Median	Interquartile Range	Consensus Achieved
School counselors learn how to use data to show they are effectively promoting career readiness...			
1. by taking a required a research methodology course	6	4	No
2. by taking a required course in program evaluation	7	2	No
3. by taking a required a course in assessment	7	1.5	Yes
4. by taking an introduction to school counseling course that includes use of data as a required component	7	1	Yes
5. by embedding use of data into all counseling courses	4	1.5	No
6. as part of practicum	6	3	No
7. as part of internship	6	2	No
8. through coursework that requires students to design goals, measure and discuss them.	7	1.5	Yes

9. through coursework that requires students to develop a comprehensive school counseling program (ASCA Model)	7	1.5	Yes
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At the end of the round two survey, experts were given the opportunity to add, reject, modify or clarify responses from round one. There were two additions made by one expert to Part A of the survey relating to instructional practices. One question asking for clarification was noted in response to Part B of the survey related to skills and concepts. The comments are listed in Table 6. At the close of round two, a total of 44 items (63.8%) reached consensus. The remaining 25 (36.2%) items were used as the basis for the round three survey. The distribution of scores can be found in Appendix L.

Table 6

Round Two Comments

Section	Comment
Part A: Instructional Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding systems theory and detailed information related to multicultural counseling
Part B: Skills and Concepts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Question 18: I wasn't exactly sure what this item meant. I don't think we should just rely on practica placements to teach career counseling if this is what this item meant.

Round Three Results

In round three, experts were asked to rate their level of agreement on items that had not yet reached consensus on a scale of one (strongly disagree) to seven (strongly agree) (See Appendix J). The survey instrument was again divided into three parts; Part A= Instructional Practices (research question one), Part B=Skills and Concepts that Promote Career Readiness

(research question two), and Part C= Methods/Venues Used to Teach Data Collection Relating to Career Readiness (research question 3). This time, the interquartile range and the median score were included for each item. Experts were asked to provide further explanation for items where they rated themselves outside the consensus. Consensus was considered achieved when the median score was at or above 6 and the interquartile range was at or below 1.5 (Jenkins & Smith, 1994). Six of the seventeen confirmed experts (35.3 %) submitted responses for round three.

Experts were able to reach consensus on a total of ten (40%) items out of 25 in round three. In round three, 37.5% of the remaining items representing research question one (instructional practices) (see Table 7), 50% of the items relating to research question two (skills/concepts that promote career readiness) (see Table 8) reached consensus, as well as 40% of the remaining items pertaining to question three (methods/venues used to teach data collection relating to career readiness) (see Table 9).The overall level of consensus for each research question at the end of round three is illustrated in Table 10. The distribution of scores can be found in Appendix M.

Table 7

Instructional Practices Necessary to Prepare School Counselors to Conduct Career Counseling in Grades K-12: Question One -Round Three Results

Item	Median	Interquartile Range	Consensus Achieved
A school counselor prepared to conduct career counseling in grades K-12...			
1. understands Super's Life Span Life Space Theory	6.5	2	No
2. understands Krumboltz Learning	5.5	1.75	No

Theory of Career Counseling and
Happenstance

3. understands the narrative approach to career counseling	6.5	3	No
4. reads relevant empirical studies from career focused peer reviewed journals	5	2.5	No
5. has participated in service learning in a career setting	4.5	2.5	No
6. knows how to use the Occupational Outlook Handbook (OOH)	6.5	1.25	Yes
7. is aware of labor market information	7	.75	Yes
8. has participated in online discussion as part of their career counseling class	3	4.5	No
9. has knowledge of portfolio development	5	2.25	No
10. has developed a portfolio	4	2	No
11. can write persuasively	5.5	1	No
12. can write a research paper	6	1	Yes
13. understands the organization of career development	6	1.25	Yes
14. has taken a general career counseling course that uses examples from different fields	7	1.5	Yes
15. has taken a career course specific to school counseling	3.5	3.5	No
16. has knowledge of National Career Development Association (NCDA) Guidelines	6.5	1.25	Yes

Table 8

Skills and Concepts Necessary to Promote Career Readiness: Question Two-Round Three Results

Item	Median	Interquartile Range	Consensus Achieved
To be able to promote career readiness, school counselors....			
1. are aware of grants available (i.e., MS Kids 2 College, HS Access Grants)	5.5	1.25	No
2. understand foundational theories and literature related to career development	7	.25	Yes
3. are able to understand and guide career development activities using foundational theories	7	1.25	Yes
4. can rely on internship or practicum supervisor to teach career counseling	2.5	3.25	No

Table 9

Methods/Venues Used to Teach Data Collection Relating to Career Readiness: Question Three-Round Three Results

Item	Median	Interquartile Range	Consensus Achieved
School counselors learn how to use data to show they are effectively promoting career readiness...			
1. by taking a required a research methodology course	6.5	.75	Yes
2. by taking a required course in program evaluation	6.5	3	No

3. by embedding use of data into all counseling courses	5.5	3	No
4. as part of practicum	6.5	1.5	Yes
5. as part of internship	6.5	1.25	Yes

Table 10

Overall Consensus Status for Research Questions at the End of Round Three

Research Question	Total Number of Items	Level of Agreement	
		Round Two	Round Three
How are school counseling students prepared to conduct career counseling in grades K-12?	37	21/37 (56.7%)	27/37 (72.9%)
What key concepts, attitudes, and/or skills do you believe are necessary for school counselors to promote career readiness?	23	21/23 (91.3%)	22/23 (95.6%)
In what ways do you or does your program teach school counseling students to use data to show they are effectively promoting career readiness with their K-12 students?	9	4/9 (44.9%)	6/9 (66.7%)
TOTAL	69	46/69 (66.7%)	55/69 (79.7%)

In round three, experts were invited to provide explanation for any items in which they found themselves outside of the consensus. Part A (instructional practices) of the survey yielded the least amount of consensus and all six experts provided commentary. Table 11 provides a list of comments by survey item. Commentary for items in Part B (skills and concepts that promote

career readiness) was elicited from five of the six participants (see Table 12). Part C of the survey (methods/venues used to teach data collection relating to career readiness) evoked comments from four of the expert participants (see Table 13).

Table 11

Commentary for Round Three Part A

Item	Comment
A school counselor prepared to conduct career counseling in grades K-12...	
1. understands Super’s Life Span Life Space Theory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A thorough understanding, especially the developmental tasks and early indicators can inform appropriate interventions.
2. understands Krumboltz Learning Theory of Career Counseling and Happenstance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I think there are other more useful theories to be learned
3. understands the narrative approach to career counseling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It’s one approach, but not a necessary one.
4. reads relevant empirical studies from career focused peer reviewed journals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is important to remain current on relevant intervention research • I can only see 1-5 on my screen. However, my answer is 6- agree fairly strongly.
5. has participated in service learning in a career setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Just not necessary
6. knows how to use the Occupational Outlook Handbook (OOH)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very important for middle and high school, but not really relevant for early grades.
7. is aware of labor market information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OOH and O*NET provide this data

8. has participated in online discussion as part of their career counseling class
- Not really sure what the value of this would be. Use of technology is important, but simply participating in an online discussion is not really relevant.
 - Just not sure why this is necessary. I think they need to have participated in some type of discussion, but it could be online or face-to-face.
 - Might be useful but certainly not necessary.
9. has knowledge of portfolio development
- I think portfolios are helpful, but not a necessary component of being a competent K-12 counselor related to career.
 - Portfolio development or individualized learning plans are important parts of a comprehensive career development program.
10. has developed a portfolio
- I think portfolios are helpful, but not a necessary component of being a competent K-12 counselor related to career.
12. can write a research paper
- My appropriate skill would be the ability to write a technical report for program evaluation. That I would rate as a 7.
 - I think they need to be a fairly strong writer, although I am not sure they it has to be a “research paper”.
13. understands the organization of Career Development
- Not really sure what this means. The sentence is very unclear.
 - I am not sure 100% I understand this- if it is referring to the idea of career development (theory, stages) then yes, very important (6).
 - If it is referring to organizations such as NCDA or College Board I would rate it a 7.
 - How can you facilitate something that you don't understand?

- | | |
|---|---|
| 14. has taken a general course that uses examples from different fields | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I do not understand the question. Examples from what different fields? |
| 15. has taken a career course specific to school counseling | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They need to understand the ramifications beyond school age. Limiting a course to school counselors would not really be giving the complete literature. |

Table 12

Commentary for Round Three Part B

Item	Comment
To be able to promote career readiness, school counselors...	
3. are able to understand and guide career development activities using foundational theories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plus newer theories (must go beyond foundational theories)
4. can rely on internship or practicum supervisor to teach career counseling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are a masters-only program. Students do not teach career counseling courses. • The ASCA model is very clear that this is to be woven through the curriculum to help school counselors to understand and focus on all three aspects of the model. • I strongly disagree that the majority of teaching on career counseling should fall on the internship supervisor. Their purpose is to help with practice, not teach theory or multicultural competence related to career. • If you mean the site supervisor, this would be a poor assumption. If you mean the university faculty supervisor, too many DON'T understand career counseling and see it as peripheral. I think this should never happen—along the lines of “a set up for failure”.

Table 13

Commentary for Round 3 Part C

Item	Comment
School counselors learn how to use data to show they are effectively promoting career readiness...	
1. by taking a required research methodology course	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is just one piece of the puzzle.
2. by taking a required course in program evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We integrate this into our foundations of school counseling course, and I think it works well. We do not require a specific course, just in program evaluation. • OR...program evaluation is included in the research methods course (it is after all a method) or in the assessment course (it is also a form of assessment). I don't think it needs to be a required separate course. For one thing, people spend entire degrees (even Ph.D.s) in trying to make sense of good, solid program evaluation.
3. by embedding use of data into all counseling courses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most courses, but not all. A capstone course (Internship) is another good final assessment point of these skills. • Most education, counseling, and psychology-related fields are advocating data-driven decision-making and use of effective interventions. Embedding use of data across all courses allows for a deeper, broader learning of this and models what we expected them to do as professionals. • This makes no sense to me—how about basic skills classes, how about group counseling. We should value the strengths we have (less data driven and more people/process driven) and make sure that we don't lose one as we try to promote the other.

Final Results

In a Delphi study, it is left largely to the researcher to decide when there is an acceptable level of consensus overall (Delbeq et al., 1975; Hsu & Sanford, 2007; Hsu & Sandford, 2007b; Linstone & Turoff, 1974; Powell, 2003; Skulmoski et al., 2007). In this study, the overall level of consensus achieved was 79.7 % of 69 items deemed important to teaching career counseling, promoting career readiness, and measuring success of interventions targeted at career readiness to pre-service counselors by the expert participants. Consideration was given to completing a fourth round in the study to attempt to yield a greater percentage of items attaining consensus. Given the small sample size of experts participating (n= 7 round 1, n=5 round 2, n=6 round 3), there was concern the attrition rate would increase if a fourth round was conducted. It was decided to end the study after the completion of round three. This decision is consistent with the literature which indicates that as the number of rounds increase there is a greater rate of attrition from the study (Hanafin, 2004; Powell, 2003; Skulmoski et al., 2007). Delbeq et al. (1975) indicate that three rounds are sufficient for most research. Further, the expert participants provided commentary on the items that they rated outside of the consensus. The commentary on many items that had not yet reached consensus was often opposed to corresponding comments made by other experts indicating that further rounds would not yield consensus. For example, in Part A item 9 in round three states, “A school counselor prepared to conduct career counseling in grades K-12 has knowledge of portfolio development.” This item elicited two opposing comments. One expert responded, “I think portfolios are helpful, but not a necessary component of being a competent K-12 counselor related to career.” The other expert commenting wrote, “Portfolio development or individualized learning plans are important parts of a comprehensive career development program.” In this instance, it also appeared that the experts viewed portfolio

development in two different contexts. One thought portfolio development referred to the counselor in training, while the other thought about portfolios in the development of K-12 students.

In other instances the level of agreement moved further apart. An example of this is item 8 in Part A in round three “A school counselor prepared to conduct career counseling in grades K-12 has participated in online discussion as part of their career counseling class.” Experts initially gave it a median score of 4 and an interquartile range of 4. In round three, the median score was 3 and the interquartile range was 4.5.

Table 14 provides a listing of all 69 items with the corresponding medians and interquartile ranges, along with the round in which consensus was achieved. The 15 items that did not reach consensus are listed with the non-parametric analysis from round three.

Table 14

Final List of Items Necessary to Teaching Career Counseling, Promote Career Readiness and Measuring Success of Career Readiness Interventions

Item	Median	Interquartile Range	Round Consensus Achieved
A school counselor prepared to conduct career counseling in grades K-12...			
1. understands theories of career counseling in general	7	1.5	2nd
2. understands Super's Life Span Life Space Theory	6.5	2	N/A
3. understands Holland's Theory of Career Choice	6	1	2nd

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4. understands Krumboltz Learning Theory of Career Counseling and Happenstance	5.5	1.75	N/A
5. understands Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT)	7	1	2nd
6. understands the narrative approach to career counseling	6.5	3	N/A
7. reads relevant empirical studies from career focused peer reviewed journals	5	2.5	N/A
8. is familiar with assessment	6	1.5	2nd
9. is able to interpret assessment results	7	1	2nd
10. is able to use results to plan Interventions	7	1	2nd
11. has participated in career counseling simulations	7	1	2nd
12. has participated in service learning in a career setting	4.5	2.5	N/A
13. has participated in reviewing case studies	7	.5	2nd
14. can develop grade/age appropriate curriculum specific to career exploration/development	7	1	2nd
15. can develop curriculum in general	7	.5	2nd
16. knows how to use the Occupational Outlook Handbook (OOH)	6.5	1.25	3rd
17. is aware of labor market information	7	.75	3rd
18. knows how to use technology related career tools (i.e., Naviance, Kuder, etc.)	6	1.5	2nd
19. has general knowledge of use and evaluation of resources	6	1	2nd

20. has participated in online discussion as part of their career counseling class	3	4.5	N/A
21. has knowledge of portfolio development	5	2.5	N/A
22. has developed a portfolio	4	2	N/A
23. has tracked their own personal career path	7	1.5	2nd
24. can write persuasively	5.5	1	N/A
25. can write a research paper	6	1	3rd
26. understands how to plan for career development	7	0	2nd
27. understands how to design career development programming	7	.75	2nd
28. understands the organization of career development	6	1.25	3rd
29. understand best practices in Intervention	7	1	2nd
30. has taken a MS level career course	7	0	2nd
31. has taken a general career counseling course that uses examples from different fields	6	1.25	3rd
32. has taken a career course specific to school counseling	3.5	3.5	N/A
33. has knowledge of National Career Development Association (NCDA) Guidelines	6.5	1.25	3rd
34. has knowledge of American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Mindsets and Behaviors for College and Career Readiness	7	1	2nd

35. has studied the implications of multicultural counseling	7	1.5	2nd
36. understands the overlap between career counseling and personal counseling	7	1	2nd
37. is able to integrate career theory into personal theoretical orientation	7	1.5	2nd

To be able to promote career readiness, school counselors....

1. understand links between career development, readiness and mental health	7	0	2nd
2. are aware of grants available (i.e., MS Kids 2 College, HS Access Grants)	5.5	1.5	N/A
3. have knowledge of ASCA Standards	7	1	2nd
4. have knowledge of the ASCA Mindsets and Behaviors for College and Career Readiness	7	1	2nd
5. have knowledge of ethical standards	7	1	2nd
6. understand that not all people work for the same reasons	7	1	2nd
7. understand that not all people have the benefit of choosing a best career match	7	1	2nd
8. be aware of changing work/workforce in the 21st Century	7	1	2nd
9. understand the importance of career development and career education	7	1	2nd
10. understand that promoting career readiness is one of their main jobs	7	1.5	2nd
			2nd

11. believe that all students should have career awareness, knowledge and skills from K-12	7	1	
12. understand the ease of incorporating career counseling into all aspects of school counseling	7	0	2nd
13. recognize, understand and articulate factors that shape career development and impact career intervention	6	1.5	2nd
14. understand foundational theories and literature related to career development	7	.25	3rd
15. are able to understand and guide career development activities using foundational theories	7	1.25	3rd
16. have knowledge of intervention models/strategies and how to apply them in a developmentally appropriate way	7	1	2nd
17. understand the interrelationship between college and career readiness	7	1.5	2nd
18. can rely on internship or practicum supervisor to teach career counseling	2.5	3.25	N/A
19. get practice doing career counseling in internship or practicum	6	1.5	2nd
20. understand that career development does not just occur in high school, but includes the elementary grades and beyond high school	7	1.0	2nd
21. are familiar with measures across career development related domains (i.e., interests, skills, values, etc.)	7	1.5	2nd
22. have knowledge of eh systemic	7	1	2nd

influences that effect careers (i.e., generational effects, career aspirations, school influences, etc.)

23. understand that what kids observe in terms of the world of work make an impression (i.e., parents, own beliefs about coping with work, etc.	7	0	2nd
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School counselors learn how to use data to show they are effectively promoting career readiness...

1. by taking a required a research methodology course	6.5	.75	3rd
2. by taking a required course in program evaluation	6.5	3	N/A
3. by taking a required a course in assessment	7	1.5	2nd
4. by taking an introduction to school counseling course that includes use of data as a required component	7	1	2nd
5. by embedding use of data into all counseling courses	5.5	3	N/A
6. as part of practicum	5.5	1.5	N/A
7. as part of internship	6.5	1.25	3rd
8. through coursework that requires students to design goals, measure and discuss them.	7	1.5	2nd
9. through coursework that requires students to develop a comprehensive school counseling program (ASCA Model)	7	1.5	2nd

Chapter V

Discussion

This study was focused on pinpointing best practices for preparing school counselors to address career readiness. Best practices were identified by counselor educators who are experts in the field of career counseling using Delphi methodology. This study was designed to answer the following research questions:

1. How are school counseling students prepared to conduct career counseling in grades K-12?
2. What key concepts, attitudes, and/or skills do you believe are necessary for school counselors to promote career readiness?
3. In what ways do you or does your program teach school counseling students to use data to show they are effectively promoting career readiness with their K-12 students?

In this chapter, the central findings and their implications for future practice will be discussed. Additionally, consensus achieving items have been juxtaposed to the 12 Career Ready Practices as defined by the National Association of State Directors of Career Technical Education Consortium (NASDCTEC) (n.d.b.). Limitations and suggestions for future research will also be discussed.

The Career Ready Practices

The 12 Career Ready Practices (See Appendix G) are a set of overarching behaviors that address the knowledge, skills and attitudes that are critical to becoming career ready (NASDCTEC, n.d.b). These practices are action-oriented and are meant to be applied in a variety of settings and through different approaches. They contain reference to scope and sequence

making them relevant for students in the secondary and post-secondary levels and for adult learners (NASDCTEC, n.d.b). Different from standards, practices do not reflect finite abilities or knowledge. NASDCTEC (n.d.b) notes, “A student refines these practices throughout their full continuum of learning: through their journey in school, postsecondary, the workforce, and when they return to advance their education,” (p. 3).

The CRP provide a common measure of career readiness and a consistent vocabulary to discuss outcomes. Adherence to standards provides a link between effectiveness and accountability (Brott, 2006). Although 46 states and three territories have adopted state CTE standards, there is a significant mismatch between the state adopted standards and the Common Career Technical Core Curriculum (NASDCTEC, 2013). A Center on Educational Policy survey (2013) on state assessments for career readiness underscores this point. Their findings indicated that 32 states use applied academics to assess employability skills, (most commonly through curriculum or measures like the ASVAB or the ACT’s WorkKeys). In many states, it is the districts, or the students themselves, who are obligated to pick up the cost of the assessment (McMurrer, Frizzell & McIntosh, 2013).

Second, The CRP are linked to the Common Career Technical Core (CCTC) which is a set of rigorous, benchmarked curricular standards for CTE that provide outcome standards for completers in each of the 79 career pathways within the 16 Career Clusters (NASDCTEC, n.d.b). States may voluntarily adopt these standards (NASDCTEC, n.d.b.). Framing discussion of the findings around existing rigorous criteria such as The Career Ready Practices increases the credibility or internal validity of this study (Powell, 2003).

Third, all twelve CRPs in the CCTC directly align with the contents of the three domains in the ASCA National Model (ACTE, 2012). They provide a familiar language to apply the

findings to school counselor preparation programs. Finally, because they span a full continuum of learning, The CRP provide a lens into how well counselor education programs have “readied” pre-service counselors for their own careers as school counselors, as well as a measure of the effectiveness of their interventions to promote career readiness with students with whom they will eventually work.

Research Question One: Identifying Best Pedagogical Practices for Preparing Pre-Service Counselors to Conduct Career Counseling

Expert participants were asked to identify items that indicated how school counselors are prepared to conduct career counseling in an open-ended question in round one of the Delphi study. At the close of the six day window for survey completion, 37 unique items were generated regarding question one and were included in the second round survey. In the end, all but 10 items achieved consensus. Items that did not achieve consensus will be discussed separately.

Ten of the thirteen themes that emerged were represented by the items developed in question one. These themes could be categorized into nine of the CRP (See Table 2). The themes represented were: Knowledge of Standards; Practical Experiences; Career/Counseling Theories and Use of Scholarly Articles; Types of Assignments Given to Reinforce Learning; Integration of Career Theory into General Counseling; Development of Curriculum; Required Courses; Resources; Creating Interventions; Influences; and Assessment.

Items that Reached Consensus

Act as A Responsible and Contributing Citizen and Employee. The NASDCTEC (2013) describes career ready individuals are those who understand the responsibilities and obligations within their community and demonstrate their understanding through their actions. Further, adherence to standards or guidelines provides a measure of accountability and

effectiveness for professional practice (Brott, 2006). One theme, Knowledge of Standards, fell within the scope of this practice and a second practice, “Model Integrity, Ethical Leadership and Effective Management.” The latter category describes a career-ready individual as one who consistently acts in alignment with community held ideals to positively impact others (NASDCTEC, 2013). The concept of positive cognitive style is related. Carnavale and Desroches (2003) posited that the way people understand and engage reality can either foster or deter success. They argued that skills related to a positive cognitive style are essential in a fast-paced global economy. There were two unique items within the theme that highlighted the value of being aware of both the ASCA National Standards and the NCDA Guidelines. The items reached consensus as defined by Jenkins and Smith (1994) after the second and third rounds respectively.

Apply Appropriate Academic and Technical Skills. According to NASDCTEC (2013), “Career-ready individuals readily access and use the knowledge and skills acquired through experience and education to be more productive.” (p. 1). Two themes fit the context of this CRP. The first theme, Practical Experiences, consisted of three items in question one. However, only two items met consensus: *participation in career counseling simulations* and *participation in reviewing case studies* by the end of round 3. There were two items relating to practicum and internship that were initially generated by the experts within this theme but due to a lack of clarity as to the meaning of the items, they were not included in the round two survey instrument. The second theme fitting this practice was Career/Counseling Theories and Use of Scholarly Articles. NASDCTEC (2013) further describes career-ready individuals as those who “make connections between abstract concepts with real-world applications, and they make correct insights about when it is appropriate to apply the use of an academic skill in a workplace

environment.” (p. 1). Experts achieved consensus on four of the eight items related to theory. Experts agreed that understanding the organization of career development and theories of career counseling in general were more important than learning specific theories (4 non-consensus items) with the exception of Holland’s Theory of Career Counseling, and Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT). This is consistent with CACREP (2009) standards for Career Counseling which states that career counselors should “understand a variety of models and theories of career counseling and career development” (p. 23).

Communicate Clearly and Effectively. Communicating clearly and effectively is a hallmark for career-ready individuals who communicate thoughts, ideas, or action plans with clarity. They are excellent writers and presenters and think about the audience for their communication (NASDCTEC, 2013). Cognitive skills such as language skills are those that are portable from one context to the next and are skills everyone must know to be able to successfully hold a job (ACTE, 2010; Achieve, Inc., 2012; Carnavale & Desrochers, 2003; Conley, 2012; Conforti, 2013; Guidry, 2012). English Language Arts is one of the two content areas that proffer the most benefit for career readiness (ACTE, 2010; Conley, 2012; Conforti, 2013; Guidry, 2012; National Association of State Directors of Career Technical Education Consortium (NASDCTEC), n.d.a, n.d.c; National Governors Association Center for Best Practices 2010; U.S. Department of Labor, 1991). In question one, experts came up with five items that could be themed as Types of Assignments Given to Reinforce Learning. Two of the five items met consensus: *has tracked their own personal career path*, and *written a research paper*.

Consider the Environmental, Social and Economic Impacts of Decisions. Influences was the only theme fitting within this CRP. The one item related in question one addressed the

study of the implications of multicultural counseling. This particular CRP describes the individual who displays this behavior as one who regularly makes decisions that positively impact others and mitigates negative impact on others (NASDCTEC, 2013). Further, they adapt their skills and utilize new technologies and techniques to incorporate the social condition or environment as necessary. Flores and Heppner (2002) underscore the need for counselors to have awareness, knowledge and skills to work with a diverse population. Understanding multicultural counseling is particularly important in the area of career counseling where school counselors can serve as advocates in a system (i.e., school) that has traditionally marginalized people of color (Flores & Heppner, 2002). The sole item relating to multicultural counseling met high levels of agreement in round two. An additional item, *detailed information about multicultural counseling*, was suggested by one expert in the comment section of the round two survey instrument. The item was not added to the round three survey because the rating process had already begun, but was reported in the results in Table 6.

Demonstrate Creativity and Innovation. Demonstrating creativity and innovation include behaviors such as seeking new methods, practices and ideas from a variety of sources and applying them within a different context (NASDCTEC, 2013). Items within the theme of Integration of Career Theory into General Counseling. There were two items, *understands the overlap between career counseling and personal counseling*, and *is able to integrate career theory into personal theoretical orientation*. Both items achieved consensus.

Employ Valid and Reliable Research Strategies. Among the skills included in this area are the ability to critically evaluate new sources of information, use reliable research methodology to search for new information, and use data to inform practice in the workplace (NASDCTEC, 2013). Two themes contained items related to research. The first theme was

Career/Counseling Theories and Use of Scholarly Articles. This theme also contained items that fit within the Apply Appropriate Academic and Technical Skills CRP. The theories theme was dually categorized due the inclusion of a survey item, *using scholarly articles to teach career counseling*. This item did not achieve consensus. The major theme associated with this CRP is Assessment. There were three items that all met consensus in round two: *familiarity with assessment*, *ability to assessment results*, and *ability to use results to plan intervention*.

Plan Education and Career Path Aligned to Personal Goals. NASDCTEC, (2013)

illustrates this CRP citing the following:

Career-ready individuals take personal ownership of their own educational and career goals, and they regularly act on a plan to attain these goals. They understand their own career interests, preferences, goals and requirements. They have perspective regarding the pathways available to them and the time, effort, experience and other requirements to pursue each, including a path of entrepreneurship. They recognize the value of each step in the educational and experiential process, and they recognize that nearly all career paths require ongoing education and experience. They seek counselors, mentors and other experts in planning and execution of career and personal goals. (p. 2).

School counselors are in the unique position to lead the career readiness initiative through the delivery of a comprehensive school counseling program (College Board, 2012a, 2012b; Hines et al., 2011). In research question one, experts were asked to identify best practices that prepared pre-service counselors to conduct career counseling. Three themes were developed that met criteria for this CRP from a pedagogical perspective. All three themes were related to preparing school counselors to assist students in K-12 to plan and execute career and personal goals as part of a comprehensive school counseling program (CACREP, 2009; Wittmer, 2000).

The first theme, Development of Curriculum elicited two items relating to the *ability to develop grade/age appropriate curriculum specific to career exploration/development*, and *can develop curriculum in general*. Both items met with consensus in the second round, but interestingly, there was a stronger level of agreement for the need to assure counselors can

develop curriculum in general. The second theme, Creating Interventions, educed three items, however two items, *understands best practices in intervention* (relating to career counseling) and *understands how to plan for career development* reached consensus. The latter received unanimous ratings from the experts (median score 7, interquartile range 0). The third theme, Assessment, which was categorized under the Employ Valid and Reliable Research Strategies CRP, is listed here as well due to the inclusion of the following item: *ability to use results [of assessments] to plan intervention*.

Use of Technology to Enhance Productivity. Use of technology to enhance productivity refers to the ability to find and use technology that maximizes the value of an individual's output and to solve work place problems. Further, individuals using technology understand and take steps to mitigate potential risks that might be incurred by said usage (NASDCTEC, 2013). Resources was the only theme to fit the skills outlined in this CRP. Experts identified and came to consensus on four items: *knows how to use the Occupational Outlook Handbook, is aware of labor market information* (one expert commented that this information is online though OOH and O*NET), and *knows how to use technology related career tools (i.e., Naviance, Kuder, etc.)*. Support for the added value of using such technologies as online supervision and training modules for counselors and computer assisted career-guidance programs for client self-assessment in schools is evident in the literature (Larrabe & Blanton, 1999; Hughes & Karp, 2004; National Career Development Association, 2009; Stevens & Lundberg, 1998).

Themes Outside the 12 Career Ready Practices

Question one had only one theme that fell outside the scope of the 12 Career Ready Practices. Experts identified 3 items that comprised theme of Required Courses. Two items,

taken a MS level career course, and taken a general career counseling course that uses examples from different fields were able to reach a level of agreement that allowed for consensus. The latter item met the criteria outlined by Jenkins and Smith (1994) for consensus, with a median score of 6 and an interquartile range of 1.25, while the former was unanimously decided to be a best practice (median score of 7 and interquartile range of 0). The one item that did not reach consensus was *has taken a career course specific to school counseling*. It met with wide levels of discrepancy in agreement (median score 3.5 and interquartile range of 3.5) and elicited comments from one expert about the lack of necessity of a specialized course. The expert stated, “They need to understand the ramifications beyond school age. Limiting a course to school counselors would not really be giving the complete literature.” Pérusse et al. (Fall, 2015) confirmed that 42 programs offered specialized career courses specifically for school counselors. Neglecting to modify career courses or offer separate courses for school counselors has a down side. Career courses often do not address career development for elementary aged students who are at very different developmental stages than their high school aged or adult counterparts (Emmett, 1997; Gysbers, 2013; Knight, 2014; Phillips & Blustein, 1994). Worthy of note, the demographic information collected for this study indicated that three of the seven experts who completed the round one survey came from programs that offered career courses exclusively for school counselors. The research supports advocacy for coursework specifically related to career development in schools for elementary-aged students due to their very different developmental needs (Emmett, 1997; Knight 2014).

Non-Consensus Items

Jenkins and Smith (1994) define items not reaching consensus as having a median score of below six on a seven point Likert-type scale and having an interquartile range of greater than 1.5. Ten of the 37 items (27.1%) in five themes did not meet consensus by round three. Within Career/Counseling Theories and Use of Scholarly Articles theme items included: *understands Super's Life Span Life Space Theory*, *understands Krumboltz Learning Theory of Career Counseling and Happenstance*, *understands the narrative approach to career counseling*, and *reads relevant empirical studies from career focused peer reviewed journals*. The item included within the theme of Practical Experiences was, *has participated in service learning in a career setting*. The Types of Assignments Given to Reinforce Learning theme contained: *has participated in online discussion as part of their career counseling class*, *has developed a career portfolio*, and *can write persuasively*. Within Creating Interventions the following item was included: *has knowledge of portfolio development*. The item contained within the theme of Required Courses was *has taken a career course specific to school counseling*. All of the items are discussed in the context of the CRP. The non-consensus item in Required Courses did not fit within any CRP.

Apply Appropriate Academic and Technical Skills. Two themes contained non-consensus items that were representative of skills required to practice appropriate academic and technical skills. The first theme, Career/Counseling Theories and Use of Scholarly Articles, had four items that did not meet consensus. While the experts agreed that teaching counseling theories in general was a best practice, experts did not agree on specific theories that could be considered best practice to teach other than Holland's Theory of Career Development and SCCT. All items that did not meet consensus were specific theories: *understands Super's Life Span Life*

Space Theory; understands Krumboltz Learning Theory of Career Counseling and Happenstance; and understands the narrative approach to career counseling. The exception was, *reads relevant empirical studies from career focused peer reviewed journals.* Comments for all of the items appeared to convey that theory was more a matter of personal preference. For example, one expert wrote pertaining to the item on Krumboltz Learning Theory, “I think there are more useful theories to be learned.” In regard to the narrative approach to career counseling, an expert commented, “It’s one approach, but not a necessary one.”

The second theme with one non-consensus item was Practical Experience. The only item that did not reach consensus was *has participated in service learning in a career setting.* Scores ranged from 2 (disagree) to 6 (agree) on the 7 point Likert-type scale. The one expert commenting stated, “It’s just not necessary.” The literature is fraught with counter indications that more training and experience is needed for school counselors in the field for career counseling (Anctil et al., 2012; Anderson, 1998; Pérusse & Goodnough, 2005; University of Washington Career Center, 2002; Warnke, 1996).

Communicate Clearly and Effectively. There were three items in the Types of Assignments Given to Reinforce Learning that did not reach acceptable levels of agreement. The first, *has participated in online discussion as part of their career counseling class,* generated the greatest amount of scatter in all of question one. Scores on the 7 point Likert-type scale ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree), though the score of 7 was an outlier. It also generated the most commentary which allowed for some insight as to why this item was rejected. All three experts who commented indicated that discussion in general was more important than the venue in which it took place. The second item, *has developed a career portfolio,* also seemed to be a matter of preference. This item elicited two opposing comments. One expert

responded, “I think portfolios are helpful, but not a necessary component of being a competent K-12 counselor related to career.” The other expert commenting wrote, “Portfolio development or individualized learning plans are important parts of a comprehensive career development program.” The literature indicates that portfolio development is an opportunity to develop skills for reporting accountability based on the ASCA National Model (Brott, 2006). The third item, *can write persuasively*, was very consistently scored (median score 5.5, interquartile range 1) but did not reach the necessary levels of agreement. There was no insight as to why there was no consensus. However, experts agreed that writing a research paper was a best practice. The commentary regarding writing a research paper may shed light on why there was no consensus on persuasive writing. Experts wrote, “My appropriate skill would be the ability to write a technical report for program evaluation. I would rate that as a 7; and “I think [a school counselor] needs to be a fairly strong writer, although I am not sure it has to be a ‘research paper’.” Based on the commentary and only a slightly higher rating (median score of 6 qualifying the item for consensus), it is possible that the experts do agree that writing assignments are a best practice, but may not have generated quite the right examples in open question during round one.

Plan Education and Career Path Aligned to Personal Goals. Only one theme, Creating Interventions, had a sole item did not reach consensus in for this CRP. The item, *has knowledge of portfolio development*, is different from the item, *has developed a portfolio* that was previously discussed. The difference is that a counselor need not have created a portfolio to skillfully assist others in portfolio development. It is more of an intervention than a personal skill. Career portfolios have become more present at the secondary school level due to school reform initiatives at the federal and state levels. They can be viewed as roadmaps to help students navigate graduation requirements while aligning them with their own personal and

career goals (Gysbers, 2013; Rennie Center for Education Research and Policy, 2011). For example, in Connecticut, state law mandates that all students in grade 6-12 have a Student Success Plan (SSP) (“An Act Concerning,” 2011; “An Act Concerning Educational,” 2010). SSPs are individual portfolios focused on goal setting and achievement in three areas: academic; social/emotional and physical wellbeing; and career. They are school-wide programs, but due to the similarities to a comprehensive school counseling program, SSPs are often organized and monitored by school counselors (Connecticut State Department of Education, 2010). Such state mandates and school reform initiatives highlight the need for counselors to acquire knowledge about portfolio development (Rennie Center for Education Research and Policy, 2011). As noted earlier, clarification of this item may be needed to assure that experts understand the intended context for portfolio development. This may be an area for future research.

Summary

The first research question asked how are school counseling students prepared to conduct career counseling in grades K-12. The experts were called upon to identify best instructional practices through the Delphi and came to consensus on 27 necessary items. In the discussion for question one, the CRP were viewed from a pedagogical lens to try to answer the question, “is what we are teaching pre-service counselors preparing them to be career ready?” The question is important because school counselors report, and the research substantiates their claims, that many pre-service training programs for counselors do not equip school counselors with the skills and attitudes necessary to address college and career readiness, but rather focus on individual therapy and interventions (Anderson, 1998; College Board, 2012b; Hines et al., 2011). When the 27 items that were identified and agreed upon by the experts as best practices were juxtaposed to the CRP, nine of the 12 CRP were addressed leaving a gap of three skill areas required to be

considered career ready. The CRP that were not included in the items deemed critical to preparing counselors to conduct career counseling by the experts included: personal health and financial wellbeing, utilizing critical thinking to make sense of problems and persevere in solving them, and work productively in teams while using cultural/global competence. None of the missing practices were present in the non-consensus items.

Research Question Two: Identifying Best Practices for Teaching Pre-Service Counselor to Promote Career Readiness

In an open-ended question in round one of the Delphi study expert participants were asked to identify the key concepts, attitudes, and/or skills necessary for school counselors to promote career readiness. At the close of the six day window for survey completion, 23 unique items were generated regarding research question two and were included in the second round survey. By the end of round three, all but two items did not achieve consensus.

Nine of the thirteen themes that emerged were represented by the items developed in question one. These themes could be categorized into nine of the CRP (See Table 2). The nine themes were: career/counseling theories and use of scholarly articles; assessment; practical experience; creating interventions; integration of career theory into general counseling; knowledge of standards (i.e., ASCA, NCDA, ethical, etc.); influences (i.e., multiculturalism, role of work, systems, etc.); role of the school counselor; and resources. Two themes, Resources and the Role of the School Counselor did not fit within the confines of the CRP.

Items that Reached Consensus

Act as a Responsible and Contributing Citizen and Employee & Model Integrity, Ethical Leadership and Effective Management. As with research question one, Knowledge of Standards is the only theme that fit both CRP mentioned. Experts strongly agreed (median score

7, interquartile range 1) that knowledge of standards plays a role in promoting career readiness. There were three items included: *have knowledge of ASCA Standards; have knowledge of the ASCA Mindsets and Behaviors for College and Career Readiness; and have knowledge of ethical standards*. It is important to note that the ASCA Mindsets and Behaviors for College and Career Readiness (2014) are meant to replace the ASCA Student Standards compiled in 1997. These new standards are researched based and “describe the knowledge, skills and attitudes students need to achieve academic success, college and career readiness and social/emotional development” (ASCA, 2014 p.1).

Apply Appropriate Academic and Technical Skills. Two related themes fell within this CRP, Practical Experience and Career/Counseling Theories and Use of Scholarly Articles. One of two items under Practical Experience, *can get practice doing career counseling in internship or practicum*, reached acceptable levels of agreement. Three items in the Theories theme met consensus. *Understand foundational theories and literature related to career development* achieved very strong levels of agreement (median score 7, interquartile range .25) A second item, *understand that career development does not just occur in high school, but includes elementary grades and beyond high school*, also received high levels of consensus. This can be interpreted that understanding the literature and understanding that career development is a life-long endeavor (essentially the underpinning of Super’s (1980) Life-space, Life-span Model) is a necessary skill to promote career readiness. The results for this item are juxtaposed to question one where they were asked to rate best instructional practices, the experts did not come to consensus that reading *relevant empirical studies from career-focused peer-reviewed journals* was a best practice, nor was *specifically teaching Super’s Model*. However, it is consistent with

expert ratings on *teaching career theory in general as a best practice*. The last item in this theme was, *are able to understand and guide career development activities using foundational theories*.

Utilize Critical Thinking to Make Sense of Problems and Persevere in Solving

Them. This NASDCTEC (2013) practice indicates that a career-ready individual can recognize, understand the nature of, and thoroughly investigate the root cause of problems. They can consider options, devise effective plans and implement them. Further, they monitor the problem to assure the intervention was successful (NASDCTEC, 2013). Creating Interventions had one item in research question two. Experts came to a consensus that having knowledge of intervention models/strategies and how to apply them in a developmentally appropriate way was important in promoting career readiness. This notion is well supported by the literature (Emmett, 1998, Gysbers, 2013; Gysbers & Lapan, 2009; Knight, 2014). There seemed to be a discrepancy between best practices for teaching career counseling and concepts/skills necessary for promoting career readiness. In research question one, although *apply career counseling in a developmentally appropriate way* was indicated as a skill necessary to promote career readiness, experts indicated there was lack of necessity for a specialized course in career counseling for school counselors. However, it has been established that career courses often do not address career development for elementary-aged students who are at very different developmental stages than their high school aged or adult counterparts (Emmett, 1997; Gysbers, 2013; Knight, 2014; Pérusse et al., 2001b Phillips & Blustein, 1994).

Creating Interventions was the only theme represented in two additional CRP: Communicate Clearly, Effectively and With Reason; and Plan Education and Career Path Aligned to Personal Goals. According to NASDCTEC (n.d.b), it is the role of the school

counselor to “assist in the planning and execution of career and personal goals.” (p.2). This is consistent with the ASCA National Model (2012).

Consider the Environmental, Social and Economic Impacts of Decisions. The Influences theme had six items which all met with consensus. They included: *understand that not all people work for the same reasons; understand that not all people have the benefit of choosing the best career match; be aware of changing work /workforce in the 21st Century; recognize; understand and articulate factors that shape career development and impact career intervention; have knowledge of systemic influences that effect careers (i.e., generational effects, career aspirations; school influences, etc.); and understand that what kids observe in terms of world of work make an impression (i.e., parents, own beliefs about coping with work, etc.).* The latter item was unanimously and strongly agreed upon as a critical concept for promoting career readiness (median score 7, interquartile range 0).

Demonstrate Creativity and Innovation. Demonstrating creativity and innovation is describes the career-ready person as one who seeks new methods, practices and ideas from a variety of sources and applies them within a different context (NASDCTEC, 2013). One theme was categorized within this CRP, Integrating Career Counseling. This theme contained one item, *understands link between career counseling, readiness and mental health* which received unanimous agreement (median score 7, interquartile range 0).

Employ Valid and Reliable Research Strategies. This CRP speaks to the necessity of the career-ready individual to be responsible in identifying, evaluating and adopting new ideas. A career-ready individual is also described as one “who uses an informed and reliable research process to garner new information,” and “tests new ideas and practices” (NASDCTEC, 2013). Assessment was the only theme that seemed to fit with this CRP. The one item within

assessment in question two was, *are familiar with measures across career development related domains (i.e., interests, skills, values, etc.)*. This item did achieve consensus indicating that familiarity with measures of assessment is a requisite to promote career readiness.

Self-assessments such as career interest inventories, personality inventories, and work values inventories are an established piece of the career domain of a comprehensive school counseling program and have shown to have some impact on career readiness (ASCA, 2012; Connecticut State Department of Education, 2008; Hughes & Mecher Karp, 2004). Studies have also linked schools that have effective college and career counseling services with higher enrollment in Advance Placement courses and as predictors of success in full-time college attendance (Lapan et al., 2012).

Themes Outside the 12 Career Ready Practices

Question two had two themes that fell outside the scope of the 12 Career Ready Practices. Experts identified one item that comprised the theme of Resource: *are aware of grants available (i.e., MS Kids 2 College, HS Access Grants)*. However, it was not able to reach a level of agreement that allowed for consensus outlined by Jenkins and Smith (1994), and there was no commentary to provide insight.

Role of the School Counselor was the second theme that did not fit within the Career Ready Practices. It contained five items that met with consensus in round two: *understand the importance of career development and career education; understand that promoting career readiness is one of their main jobs; believe that all students should have career awareness, knowledge and skills from K-12; understand the ease of incorporating career counseling into all aspects of school counseling; and understand the interrelationship between college and career readiness*. These items were more about the beliefs and knowledge about what a school

counselors does, rather than more specific actionable skills. All of these items align with the ASCA National Model (2012), which strives to promote and enhance the learning process for all students through the delivery of services.

Non-Consensus Items

Research question two had the greatest overall level of agreement (95.6 %). There were only two items in question two that did not reach consensus. The first item contained in Resources was previously discussed as it did not fit within the CRP. The second item is addressed below.

Apply Appropriate Academic and Technical Skills. The remaining item that did not meet consensus was listed in Practical Experience: *can rely on internship and practicum supervisor to teach career counseling*. The ratings on this item ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (slightly agree). Expert responses drew out the ideas that internship and practicum sites are places where counselors practice career counseling rather than learn it. One expert commented on the level of preparedness of both school and university based supervisors with respect to furthering counselor knowledge of career counseling. They stated, “If you mean the site supervisor, this would be a poor assumption. If you mean the university faculty supervisor, too many don’t understand career counseling and see it as peripheral. I think this should never happen--along the lines of “a set up for failure.” There is evidence to support this idea in the literature. A national survey of school counselors indicated that pre-service and in-service training did not adequately prepare counselors to enter a school system and adopt a career readiness framework or practice career interventions (College Board, 2012b). It was further pointed out in the commentary, that the ASCA National Model is very clear that career counseling is woven into all aspects of the school counseling program.

Summary

The second research question asked experts to identify key concepts, attitudes, and/or skills necessary for school counselors to promote career readiness. Experts indicated that practicum and internship were good places to practice career counseling, not learn it. It was identified that not all supervisors are prepared or equipped to teach career counseling to pre-service counselors.

Several items were identified as concepts that all school counselors need to do in order to promote career readiness, such as believe that all students should have career awareness. All of the items identified were aligned with the ASCA National Model, but fell outside the purview of the CRP as they were not actionable items. Experts came to consensus that having knowledge of intervention models or strategies and how to apply them in a developmentally appropriate way was important in promoting career readiness, but indicated there was lack of necessity for a specialized course in career counseling for school counselors.

Research Question Three: Identifying Best Practices for Teaching Pre-Service Counselors to Measure Effectiveness of Career Readiness Interventions

In an open-ended question in round one of the Delphi study, expert participants were asked to identify items that indicated how school counseling students are taught to use data to show they are effectively promoting career readiness with their K-12 students. At the close of the six day window for survey completion, nine unique items were generated regarding research question three and were included in the second round survey. Ultimately, six items achieved consensus. Items that did not achieve consensus will be discussed separately. Experts did not submit any items that were specifically related to measuring career readiness.

Two themes, Required Courses and Course Work Related to Data were represented in question three. These themes could be categorized into three of the CRP (See Table 2). The CRP represented were: Apply Appropriate Academic and Technical Skills; Demonstrate Creativity and Innovation; and Employ Valid and Reliable Research Strategies.

Items Reaching Consensus

Apply Appropriate Academic and Technical Skills. Experts indicated that applying appropriate academic and technical skills in relation to data is done through coursework. They identified five items that comprised the Course Work Related to Data theme. Three items met appropriate levels of agreement, meaning the experts viewed the following types of coursework as best practices to learn about how to use data. The items are: *as part of internship; through coursework that requires students to design goals; and measure and discuss them; and through coursework that requires students to develop a comprehensive school counseling program (ASCA Model)*. Experts did not submit any items that were specifically related to career readiness. Course Work Related to Data was dually categorized into the Demonstrate Creativity and Innovation CRP.

Demonstrate Creativity and Innovation. As part of the descriptor for Demonstrate Creativity and Innovation, the NASDCTEC (2013) includes the ability to consider unconventional ideas to solve work place problems, and the ability discern which ideas will add the greatest benefit and apply them Course Work Related to Data could be categorized here as well as in the Apply Appropriate Academic and Technical Skills CRP discussed above.

Employ Valid and Reliable Research. Required Courses fell outside of the purview of the CRP in question one and no items were included in question two. However, it was the only theme included in this CRP. The experts submitted four unique items and came to consensus on

three which they considered best practice for teaching counselors how to use data to show they are effectively promoting career readiness by completing: *a required a research methodology course; a required course in assessment; and an introduction to school counseling course that includes use of data as a required component.* The experts' recommendations were also in line with CACREP (2009) standards for school counseling and career counseling in regard to research and evaluation.

Non-Consensus Items

As previously noted, items that do not meet consensus have a median score of below six on a seven point Likert-type scale and have an interquartile range of greater than 1.5 (Jenkins & Smith, 1994). Three of the nine items (33.3%) in two themes representing research question three did not meet consensus by round three. They are as follows. Course Work Related to Data: *by embedding use of data into all counseling courses, and as part of practicum.* Required Courses: *by taking a required course in program evaluation.*

Apply Appropriate Academic and Technical Skills Demonstrate Creativity and Innovation. Course Work Related to Data is the only theme in both CRP categories so they will be discussed together. The first item, *as part of practicum* did not elude any comments or identifiable patterns in scoring. It is interesting to note that the experts rated course work related to data as part of internship at high levels of agreement. The second item, *by embedding use of data into all counseling courses*, engendered scores ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (agree). Comments were also scattered in terms of opinion. They ranged from the perspective of including data in all courses, “embedding use of data across courses allows for a broader, deeper learning and models what we expect them to do as professionals”, to the opposite extreme, “We

should value the strengths we have (less data-driven and more people/process driven) and make sure we don't lose one as we try to promote the other.”

Employ Valid and Reliable Research. The theme of Required Courses was represented in this CRP. One item, *by taking a required a course in program evaluation*, failed to reach consensus. Experts scored this item on average (median score 6.5), However, the range of scores was from 4 (neither agree nor disagree) to 7 (strongly agree) driving up the interquartile range to 3. Two expert participants chose to respond. While they both scored the item as a four (neither agree nor disagree), their comments indicated they clearly had a preference. The comments indicated that program evaluation was included as a part of other courses (i.e., Foundations in School Counseling and Research Methods or Assessment) and that it was working out well within their programs. Additional commentary by one expert stated, “...program evaluation is included in the research methods course (it is after all a method) or in the assessment course (it is also a form of assessment). I don't think it needs to be a separate required course.” The expert went on to say, “people spend entire degrees (even Ph.D.s) in trying to make sense of good, solid program evaluation.” Comments pertaining to this item were of interest because in research question one, the commentary in round two indicated that an additional recommendation for a required skill would be “the ability to write a technical report for a program evaluation.” This recommendation was not included as survey item in round three because the rating process had already begun. It is unclear in what venue the pre-service counselors would learn to write the previously mentioned report based on the lack of consensus on the present item.

Summary

The third research question asked how school counselors are being prepared to use data to measure their impact on the career readiness of their future students. The experts were called

upon to identify best instructional practices through the Delphi and came to consensus on six of the nine items they generated. While experts generated items related to both course work and required courses, they did not include a single item specifically related to measuring career readiness. The literature suggests that there is no common set of standards or standard measures that are used consistently by states or at the local level to assess career readiness (McMurrer, Frizzell & McIntosh, 2013; NASDCTEC, 2013). No clear consensus has been achieved in determining exactly what makes a student prepared for life in the world of work (Career Readiness Partner Council, 2012b, Conforti, 2013; Guidry, 2012). Without a common definition of career readiness, it is difficult to develop a standard of measure.

Trustworthiness of Study

It is often difficult to evaluate the accuracy and reliability of a judgment. As a result, outcomes cannot be equated to measurement (Woudenberg, 1991). In a qualitative study such as a Delphi study, it is incumbent on the researcher to ensure trustworthiness. The concept of trustworthiness is important to determining a study's worth. There are four conditions that must be satisfied which parallel the concepts of validity and reliability used in purely quantitative studies. The conditions are: establishing credibility (internal validity), transferability (external validity), dependability (reliability) and confirmability (objectivity) (Gruba, 1981; Siegle, n.d.).

Credibility can be defined as the level of confidence in the truth of the research findings or how congruent the findings are with reality (Gruba, 1981; Merriman, 1999; Siegle, n.d.). Credibility is established in five ways in this study. Triangulation was through the Delphi with the experts serving as independent sources of data. Second, Delphi members were also asked to "check" the data they pooled throughout the study to see if it was plausible by rating agreement and commenting on each survey item at each iteration (Gruba, 1981). Powell (2003) notes that

checking data internally will help assure consistency. The information garnered in round one and throughout the discussion was compared to existing student standards for career readiness (referencing NASDCTEC) to further support the credibility of the study. Third, experts were given three iterations of the survey instrument over a period of two months, with no more than two weeks in between rounds to increase the validity of the findings (Hanafin, 2004; Merriman, 1999). Fourth, experts were given a summary of the findings of each round and asked to rate and comment on the data as it emerged. Finally, credibility was enhanced by making a clear decision trail and a clear description of the researcher's assumptions and orientation at the outset of the study (Merriman, 1999; Powell, 2003).

Transferability, or the generalizability of the study, was addressed by purposefully sampling the experts who would serve as Delphi members so that the issue of counselor preparation to address career readiness could be studied in depth instead of learning what is generally true (Merriman, 1999). Care was taken to assure experts were demographically diverse on several factors including gender, years of experience teaching, geographical location, and accreditation of programs. Further, the design of the study is well defined and the process is explained step by step. The study was implemented with fidelity and consistency to assure dependability and confirmability. It is critical to the worth of this study that the findings reported do not reflect any researcher bias and are strictly the perceptions of the participants (Gruba, 1981, Merriman, 1999; Siegle, n.d.).

Limitations

The Delphi methodology has several inherent limitations. First, one of the most important factors in designing a Delphi study is the identification of expert panelists (Hsu & Sanford, 2007; Nworie, 2011). It is critical that the expert be knowledgeable in their field or on the issue being

addressed since this method relies on their opinion to form consensus and inform the community of practice. Delphi methodology does not call for representativeness of the sample for statistical purposes; rather it suggests that the representativeness must come from the quality of the experts (Powell, 2003). In this study, the qualifications of experts invited to participate were clearly defined and prudence was used to ensure the experts were demographically diverse. However, only 34% of the invited experts agreed to participate in the study.

The second limitation is the risk for high rates of attrition or non-response (Hanafin, 2004; Powell, 2003; Skulmoski et al., 2007; Hsu & Sanford, 2007; Hsu & Sanford, 2007b). Achieving consensus requires several iterations of survey completion over time. Maintaining expert participation can be difficult. In this study, 17 experts conveyed willingness to fully participate at the onset and were sent all three iterations of the survey instrument. However, only seven experts completed round one, five completed round two, and six completed round three. It is important to note that there is an inconsistent relationship between panel size and the effectiveness criteria, indicating that number of participants does not necessarily impact the accuracy of findings using Delphi methodology (Rowe & Wright, 1999).

Related to attrition, a third limitation of this study is the number of items that did not garner consensus. After round three, 79.7 % of the items had achieved consensus. Fifteen of the 69 items did not receive ratings indicative of consensus from the expert participants. Completing a fourth round may have increased the overall percentage of consensus, but doing so risked increased attrition. The literature indicates that as the number of rounds increase there is a greater rate of attrition from the study (Hanafin, 2004; Powell, 2003; Skulmoski et al., 2007). Delbeq et al. (1975) indicated that three rounds are sufficient for most research. The non-consensus items were discussed earlier in this chapter.

The scope of the responses is also a limitation in this study. This study offers best practices agreed upon by a limited number of experts. There are a large number of topics related to career readiness in the existing literature that the experts neglected to address. While multiculturalism was mentioned, items such as gender issues, non-traditional careers, access to STEM careers and career development for students with special needs were not. Further, items related to exposing K-12 students to and helping them plan to access higher levels of occupation were also not mentioned. School counselors play a central role in the career development of all students (ASCA, 2012). However, students can be left with “limited opportunities unless school counselors provide students with a bridge – career assistance leading to a job that will support a sustainable lifestyle in an expanding economy” (Feller, 2010 p.16). One of the items that met unanimous consensus, *understand that what kids observe in terms of the world of work make an impression (i.e., parents, own beliefs about coping with work, etc.)*, begins to touch at this concept, but there were no further items or commentary regarding how school counselors should be prepared to address these issues. This is an area for future research.

An additional limitation of this study is the extent to which one can generalize the findings. This study offers best practices as identified and agreed upon by a limited number of experts relating to pedagogical trends in how to prepare pre-service school counselors to address career readiness with students in grades K-12. It is the goal of this research is to understand the relationship between the preparation that career counseling courses at the post-secondary level provide school counselors and their implications on career readiness, so that best practices can be transferred to other counselor education programs. Hsu & Sanford (2007) cautioned that Delphi methodology is not the total solution, rather one piece of the puzzle.

Career Ready Practices Not Identified

Two of the 12 Career Ready Practices were not linked to any of the themes identified by the experts. The first was Work Productively in Teams While Using Cultural/Global Competence. The one item related in question one addressed the study of the implications of multicultural counseling. This CRP is defined by NASDCTEC (n.d.b.) as follows:

Career-ready individuals positively contribute to every team, whether formal or informal. They apply an awareness of cultural differences to avoid barriers to productive and positive interaction. They find ways to increase the engagement and contribution of all team members. They plan and facilitate effective team meetings. (p.2)

This operational definition points to applying awareness of cultural difference to team work.

The actual item suggested by the expert panelists speaks only to counselors having studied multicultural counseling. This item was categorized in Consider the Environmental, Social and Economic Impacts of Decisions CRP. They make no suggestions in any item regarding the use of teamwork or collaboration. It should be noted that an additional item, “detailed information about multicultural counseling” was suggested by one expert in the comment section of the round two survey instrument, but was not added because the rating process had already begun.

The second CRP that was not identified was Attend to Personal Health and Financial Well-Being. Skills and mindsets included: exercise and eating a healthy diet, and link personal health to workplace performance. NASDCTEC (2013) indicated that financial security can reduce personal stress. They connected reduced stress to the ability to contribute more fully to personal career success. Skills and outcomes related to physical and financial well-being are documented within the ASCA Mindsets and Behaviors for Student Success (2014) and are included in the eight components of college and career readiness counseling (NOSCA, 2010). Further, Poynton, Lapan and Marcotte (2015) indicated that nearly half of high school seniors had limited financial planning strategies, creating a barrier to attaining college and career

success. However, experts did not identify any related items. There are several reasons why this CRP was may not have generated any items for consideration. Experts were asked to identify best practices to prepare counselors for career counseling, prepare them to promote career readiness, and to how to measure effectiveness of career readiness interventions. It is possible the questions themselves prevented experts from identifying items within the practice of Attend to Personal Health and Financial Well-being. It is also possible that this content is covered in other courses outside the career counseling course. Finally, it is equally possible that the experts in this study did not see any benefit in items that might relate to Personal Health and Financial Well-being. This is an area for future research.

Areas for Future Research

Areas for future research have been identified related to counselor preparation and career readiness. Despite their salient role in career counseling, there is a paucity of literature on how to prepare school counselors in this area. Is what we are teaching pre-service counselors preparing them to be career ready? The question is important because school counselor's report and the research substantiates their claims, that many pre-service training programs for counselors do not equip school counselors with the skills and attitudes necessary address college and career readiness, but rather focus on individual therapy and intervention (Anderson, 1998; College Board, 2012b; Hines et al., 2011; Pérusse et al., 2001; Pérusse & Goodnough 2005). This study attempts to use The 12 Career Ready Practices (NASDCTEC, n.d.b.) as means to identify potential gaps in counselor preparation related to career readiness, but only ten of the practices could be matched to items generated and met with consensus by the expert panelists.

While the existing body of work indicated that school counselors are dissatisfied with the preparation they are receiving, little evidence exists of what counselor educators are doing in

career counseling courses. This researcher could only identify four studies directly related to school counselor preparation in career counseling (Anderson, 1998; College Board, 2012b; Emmett, 1998). The current study has aimed to help address this concern by providing some examples through the Delphi, but further research is needed.

Conclusion

The main goal in conducting a Delphi study is to generate new knowledge using group consensus to inform decision making (Delbeq et al., 1975; Hanafin, 2004; Linstone & Turoff, 1975; Vazquez & Leahy, 2007). It is a creative and reliable method to develop and explore ideas, concepts, policy and issues (Vazquez & Leahy, 2007). In this study, the Delphi was used to form consensus on best practices in how to prepare school counselors to conduct career counseling, promote career readiness, and assess the effectiveness of their interventions on career readiness of students in grades K-12. Best practices have emerged from the experts in each of the three areas. Five items emerged as critical. The experts unanimously agreed that a school counselor prepared to conduct career counseling in grades K-12 understands how to plan for career development and has taken a Master's level course in career counseling. They also unanimously agreed that to be able to promote career readiness, school counselors must understand links between career development, readiness, and mental health; understand the ease of incorporating career counseling into all aspects of school counseling; and understand that what kids observe in terms of the world of work make an impression. There was a clear consensus overall (95.6% agreement) on what items were considered key concepts and skills. A full listing of other best practices is shown in Appendix N.

There was some paradox between preparing counselors to conduct career readiness (question one) and preparing them to promote career readiness (question two). For example,

experts indicated there was lack of necessity of a specialized course in career counseling for school counselors. However, expert participants identified that knowledge of intervention models/strategies and how to apply them in a developmentally appropriate way was important in promoting career readiness. Additionally, teaching career theory in general was identified to be a best practice. However, experts could not come to agreement on what specific career theories should be taught. Holland's Theory of Career Choice and SCCT were the two exceptions. Further, there were gaps in agreement between identifying important skills and how school counselors were going to learn them. For example, there were high levels of agreement that using foundational theories and related literature were skills necessary to promote career readiness, but there was no consensus on using scholarly articles as a best practice to teach career counseling.

Familiarization with assessment and data interpretation is important. The experts agreed that a required course in research methods is best practice. Responsibility for teaching and using data appears to fall in introductory school counseling courses through the context of the ASCA National Model. Beyond that, there is a lack of consensus on what should be taught and where it falls and the type of coursework that should be incorporated. Most importantly, there was not one item relating to how career readiness can be measured.

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[statistics.com/reliability/cohens-kappa/](http://www.real-statistics.com/reliability/cohens-kappa/).

Appendix A

Participant Recruitment E-mail

Dear _____

I am a doctoral candidate conducting a study through the University of Connecticut regarding career readiness. I am purposefully selecting a panel of experts in the field of career counseling who are counselor educators to participate in this study. You have been identified as an expert by your colleagues based on your involvement and service to the field. Your input is highly valued and is very important to the credibility of this study. I will be employing the Delphi technique to conduct this research. I have attached the IRB approved invitation letter and information sheet for your perusal.

I hope that you will consider participating in this study after reading the attached documents. Your participation will be anonymous and will help inform the pre-service training of school counselors in the area of career counseling. If you agree to participate after reading the material attached, please reply by completing the informed consent document in the affirmative. Upon receipt of your consent to participate, I will forward you the link for your participation in the first round of the study. If you choose to decline, you may simply select the button that indicates you do not wish to participate and you will not be contacted about the study again. The link to the informed consent document is below.

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1eQh6LBMdQs4qHb0Po3sSeA9dZmQ21hg9LhxOCQVQXN8/viewform?usp=send_form.

Please complete the informed consent by January 23, 2015. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely

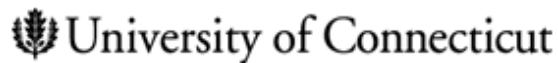
Nicole G. DeRonck, Ed. D.
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Storrs, CT 06269-2064
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Appendix B

Participant Recruitment Letter



Principal Investigator: Rachelle Pérusse, Ph.D.

Student Researcher: Nicole G. DeRonck, Ed. D.

Title of Study: A Delphi Study: How Counselor Educators in Career Counseling Courses Prepare School Counselors to Address Career Readiness

Dear Dr. _____

I would like to extend an invitation to you to participate in a study about counselor training in the area of career readiness. You have been invited to participate in this study because you have been identified by your colleagues as an expert in the field of career counseling. Determinations were made based on your involvement and service to the field and your status as a counselor educator. I would like your help to learn more about how school counselors are being trained in the area of career counseling and what knowledge, attitudes, and skills are necessary for school counselors working with students in grades K-12 to promote career readiness. It is important that your thoughts and opinions are included in this research so that the results obtained are representative of experts across the country.

The national dialogue has heightened about the role career readiness plays in creating a skilled workforce and remaining competitive in the global economy. As counselor educators, we are keenly aware that school counselors are in the unique position to lead the career readiness initiative through the delivery of a comprehensive school counseling program. Through this study, and with the expert opinions of counselor educators, our goal is to identify how K-12 school counselors are prepared to promote and monitor career readiness within their career counseling courses.

Your participation in this study will require you to complete a three item open ended questionnaire. These questions will be sent to you via a Google survey link. This should take approximately 15-30 minutes to complete depending on the detail of your responses. All participant responses will be compiled and created in to a survey. You will then be contacted to complete your level of agreement with the responses received from the group. This should take no longer than 30 minutes to complete. Once those responses are received you will again be given the same survey, this time with the statistical information about the group's level of agreement. You will be asked to re-rate your responses. This should take approximately 30 minutes to complete. If group consensus is not achieved by the third round of the survey, you will be asked to re-rate your responses one final time. This should take 5 minutes. This last round may not be necessary if consensus is achieved after the third round. This is considered Delphi methodology and is used to create an expert consensus about a specific topic.

Your responses will be anonymous throughout this survey and you will not be asked any personal identifying information. Your confidentiality will be maintained to the degree permitted by the

technology used. Specifically, no guarantees can be made regarding the interception of data sent via the Internet by any third parties.

We believe that there are no known risks associated with this study; however, the time it takes to complete the study may be an inconvenience. If you are interested in participating in this study, please affirmatively complete the informed consent and provide your preferred e-mail. If you choose to decline, you may simply select the button that indicates you do not wish to participate and you will not be contacted about the study again. The link to this document is https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1eQh6LBMdQs4qHb0Po3sSeA9dZmQ21hg9LhxOCQVQXN8/viewform?usp=send_form. I will send you the link to the first round of the study if I receive your informed consent indicating your agreement to participate. **Please complete the informed consent no later than January 23, 2015.**

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You do not have to respond to any question that you do not wish to share an answer at any time during this study. I will be happy to answer any questions you may have regarding this study. If you have further questions about this project or other research related concerns, please contact me, Dr. Nicole DeRonck at nderonck@gmail.com or my doctoral advisor, Dr. Rachelle Pérusse at rachelle.perusse@uconn.edu. If you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this study, you may contact the University of Connecticut Institutional Review Board (IRB) at 860-486-8802. The IRB is a group of people who review research studies to protect the rights and welfare of research participants.

I hope that you will consider this invitation to participate. Your input is valued and appreciated!

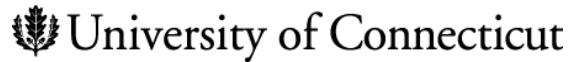
Thank you

Nicole G. DeRonck, Ed. D.
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Appendix C

Information Sheet



Information Sheet

Counselor Educator/School Counselor Preparation in Career Counseling Survey

Principal Investigator: Rachelle Pérusse, Ph.D.

Student: Nicole G. DeRonck, Ed. D.

Title of Study: A Delphi Study: How Counselor Educators in Career Counseling Courses Prepare School Counselors Address Career Readiness

You are invited to participate in this survey regarding the preparation of school counselors in the area of career counseling. I am a doctoral student at the University of Connecticut, in the department of Educational Psychology and Counselor Education. I am interested in finding out more about how school counselors are being trained in the area of career counseling and what knowledge, attitudes, and skills are necessary for school counselors working with students in grades K-12 to promote career readiness.

Your participation in this study will require completion of the attached online questionnaire. This should take approximately 10-15 minutes of your time. Your participation will be anonymous and you will not be contacted again in the future. You will not be paid for being in this study. We believe this survey does not involve any risk to you. Although you may find it interesting to participate in this study, there will be no direct benefit to you from your participation.

You do not have to be in this study if you do not want to be. I will be happy to answer any questions you have about this study. If you have further questions about this project or if you have a research-related problem, you may contact me, Dr. Nicole DeRonck at (860) 463-7279 or my doctoral advisor, Dr. Rachelle Perusse at (860) 486-0226. If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant you may contact the University of Connecticut Institutional Review Board (IRB) at (860) 486-8802. The IRB is a group of people who review research studies to protect the rights and welfare of research participants.

Please complete the attached informed consent to accept or decline participation in this study by **January 23, 2015**. Thank you for your consideration.

Appendix D

Informed Consent

Informed Consent

Through a Delphi study technique, counselor educators' perceptions of the skills and concepts that are critical to the successful preparation of school counselors in the area of career counseling can be identified, and practical implications for counselor educators can be established. The goal of this research is to understand the relationship between the preparation that career counseling courses at the post-secondary level provide school counselors and their implications for career readiness. The goal will be attained by achieving a consensus of opinions from a group of experts teaching career counseling in school counselor pre-service programs.

Should you choose to take part in this Delphi Study, your participation will be anonymous and you will not be contacted again in the future upon the completion of this study. You will not be paid for being in this study. We believe the surveys do not involve any risk to you. Although you may find it interesting to participate in this study, there will be no direct benefit to you from your participation.

Please read the information sheet. It contains the details of the study and the investigator's contact information should you have any questions. Should you agree to participate in this study, you will be sent the survey questions for round one.

* Required

I have read the attached information sheet and understand the benefits and risks associated with this study.

Please indicate your preference below.

- I agree to participate in this Delphi Study
- I do not wish to participate in this Delphi Study

Please provide your preferred e-mail address if you are participating OR if you choose not to participate please type your name so that we can remove you from our list.

*This information will only be used to send the surveys for OR remove you from for the Delphi Study. It will not be linked in any way to your responses nor will it be shared with others.

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Appendix E

Round One E-mail

Dear Dr. _____

Thank you for your willingness to participate in this Delphi study. Our goal is to identify how K-12 school counselors are prepared to promote and monitor career readiness within their career counseling courses.

Your participation in the first round of this study will require you to complete a three item open ended questionnaire. This should take approximately 15-30 minutes to complete depending on the detail of your responses. All participant responses will be compiled and created in to a survey. **Please complete the survey by February 14th.** You will receive the compiled responses from the expert group within two weeks. At that point, you will be asked to rate your level of agreement with the responses received.

As a reminder, your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You do not have to respond to any question that you do not wish to share an answer at any time during this study- just indicate N/A in the survey to allow it let you move on. I will be happy to answer any questions you may have regarding this study. If you have further questions about this project or other research related concerns, please contact me, Dr. Nicole DeRonck at nderonck@gmail.com or my doctoral advisor, Dr. Rachelle Pérusse at rachelle.perusse@uconn.edu. If you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this study, you may contact the University of Connecticut Institutional Review Board (IRB) at [860-486-8802](tel:860-486-8802). The IRB is a group of people who review research studies to protect the rights and welfare of research participants.

The link to the first round survey is below:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1vRP9DcOwhTjXPYDeHLLIYnN5_sDtETJLsL_ZQNNrg-A/viewform

Thank you again for your help with this endeavor!

Respectfully

Nicole G. DeRonck, Ed. D.
Ph.D. Candidate, Counselor Education

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Appendix F

Round One Survey

Counselor Preparation for Career Readiness Delphi Study: Round 1

In this first round of the Delphi Study, you are being provided with three open-ended questions regarding the skills and concepts that are critical to the successful preparation of school counselors in the area of career counseling and the promotion of career readiness. You will also be asked some demographic information about your program. Personal identifying information will not be collected. Your participation and responses are completely anonymous. Neither the researchers nor the other expert panelists will be able to identify who responded and in what way. This survey should take approximately 15- 30 minutes to complete based on the detail of the answers you provide.

All expert opinions will be compiled and created into a new survey that will be given to you for the second round of this Delphi Study. Please submit your response for the first round survey by February 14, 2015. Thank you for your participation! Your expert opinion matters!

* Required

1. In thinking about the school counseling students who are in a career counseling class either taught by you or within your program, please answer the following question. How are school counseling students prepared to conduct career counseling in grades K-12? *

For this question, please provide practical responses, curricular topics, activities, or tasks of school counseling students. Please feel free to answer however you see fits best. You may bullet or write complete responses.



2. What key concepts, attitudes, and/or skills do you believe are necessary for school counselors to promote career readiness? *

Please answer this question with school counseling students in career classes in mind that are either taught by you or within your program. Please feel free to answer in whatever way best conveys your expert opinion. You may provide practical responses, curricular topics, activities or tasks of school counseling students. You may bullet or write complete responses.



3. In what ways do you or does your program teach school counseling students to use data to show they are effectively promoting career readiness with their K-12 students? *

Please answer this question with school counseling students in career classes in mind that are either taught by you or within your program. Please feel free to answer in whatever way best conveys your expert opinion. You may provide practical responses, curricular topics, activities or tasks of school counseling students. You may bullet or write complete responses.



Demographic Questions

Please answer the following questions. Personal identifying information will not be collected as part of the survey or at any time associated with any response. Demographic information collected here will be used only to assure that the results obtained are from a panel whose members are representative of experts across the country.

In which region is your college or university located? *

Please chose the answer that best fits.

- Northeast
- Southeast
- Midwest
- Southwest
- West
- Non-contiguous US or territory

My college or university is *

- Public
- Private
- Other:

Is your program CACREP accredited or accredited by another accrediting body? *

Please answer with your school counseling program in mind.

- Not Accredited
- CACREP
- Other:

Is there a separate career course for school counselors? *

- Yes, there is a separate career course for school counselors
- No, school counselors take the same career course with other counseling and psychology students
- Other:

How many years have you been teaching as a counselor educator? *

- 0-5 years
- 6-10 years
- 11-15 years
- 16-20 years
- 21-25 years
- 26-30 years
- Longer than 31 years

What is your gender?

Submit

100%: You made it.

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Appendix G

The 12 Career Ready Practices (NASDCTEC, n.d.b)

Act as a Responsible and Contributing Citizen and Employee.

Career-ready individuals understand the obligations and responsibilities of being a member of a community, and they demonstrate this understanding every day through their interactions with others. They are conscientious of the impacts of their decisions on others and the environment around them. They think about the near-term and long-term consequences of their actions and seek to act in ways that contribute to the betterment of their teams, families, communities and workplace. They are reliable and consistent in going beyond the minimum expectation in participating in activities that serve the greater good.

Apply Appropriate Academic and Technical Skills.

Career-ready individuals readily access and use how knowledge and skill acquired through experienced and education to be more productive. They make connections between abstract concepts with real-world, and they make corrective insights about when it is appropriate to apply the use of an academic skill in a workplace situation.

Attend to Personal Health and Financial Well-being.

Career-ready individuals understand that relationship between personal health, workplace performance and personal well-being; they act on that understanding to regularly practice healthy diet, exercise and mental health activities. Career-ready individual also take regular action to contribute to their personal financial well-being understanding that personal financial security provides the peace of mind required to contribute more fully to their own career success.

Communicate Clearly, Effectively and with Reason.

Career-ready individuals communicate thoughts, ideas and action plans with clarity, whether using written, verbal and/or visual methods. They communicate in the workplace with clarity and purpose to make maximum use of their own and others' time. They are excellent writers; they master conventions, word choice and organization, and use effective tone and presentation skills to articulate ideas. They are skilled at interacting with others; they are active listeners and speak clearly and with purpose. Career-ready individuals think about the audience for their communications and prepare accordingly to ensure the desired outcome.

Consider the Environmental, Social and Economic Impacts of Decisions.

Career-ready individuals understand the interrelated nature of their actions regularly make decisions on that positively impact and/or mitigate negative impact on other people, organizations and the environment. They are aware of and utilize new technologies, understandings, procedures, materials and regulations affecting the nature of their work as it relates to the impact of the social condition, the environment and the profitability of the organization.

Demonstrate Creativity and Innovation.

Career-ready individuals regularly think of ideas that solve problems in new and different ways, and they contribute those ideas in a useful and productive manner to improve their organization. They can consider unconventional ideas and suggestions as solutions to issues, tasks or problems, and they discern which ideas and suggestions will add the greatest value. They seek new methods, practices and ideas from a variety of sources and seek to apply those ideas to their own workplace. They take action on their ideas and understand how to bring innovation to an organization.

Employ Valid and Reliable Research Strategies.

Career-ready individuals are discerning in accepting and using new information to make decisions, change practices or inform strategies. They use a reliable research process to search for new information. They evaluate the validity of sources when considering the use and adoption of external information or practices. They use an informed process to test new ideas, information and practices in their workplace situations.

Utilize Critical Thinking to Make Sense of Problems and Persevere in Solving Them.

Career-ready individuals readily recognize problems in the workplace, understand the nature of the problem and devise effective plans to solve the problems. They are aware of problems when they occur and take actions quickly to address the problem. They thoughtfully investigate the root cause of the problem prior to introducing solutions. They carefully consider the options to solve the problem. Once a solution is agreed upon, they follow through to ensure the problem is solved, whether through their own actions or the actions of others.

Model Integrity, Ethical Leadership and Effective Management.

Career-Ready individuals consistently act in ways that align to personal and community-held ideals and principles while employing strategies to positively influence others in the workplace. They have a clear understanding of integrity and act on this understanding in every decision. They use a variety of means to positively impact the direction and actions of a team or organization, and they apply insights into human behavior to change others' actions and attitudes and/or beliefs. They recognize the near-term and long-term effects that management's actions and attitudes can have on productivity, morale and organizational culture.

Plan Education and Career Path Aligned to Personal Goals.

Career-ready individuals take personal ownership of their own educational and career goals, and they regularly act on a plan to attain these goals. They understand their own career interests, preferences, goals and requirements. They have perspective regarding the pathways available to them and the time, effort, experience and other requirements to pursue each, including a path of entrepreneurship. They recognize the value of each step in the educational and experiential process, and they recognize that nearly all career paths require ongoing education and experience. They seek counselors, mentors and other experts to assist in the planning and execution of career and personal goals.

Use Technology to Enhance Productivity.

Career-ready individuals find and maximize the productive value of existing and new technology to accomplish workplace tasks and solve workplace problems. They are flexible and adaptive in acquiring and using new technology. They are proficient with ubiquitous technology.

applications. They understand the inherent risks—personal and organizational- of technology applications and they take actions to prevent or mitigate these risks.

Work Productively in Teams while Using Cultural/Global Competence.

Career-ready individuals positively contribute to every team, whether formal or informal. They apply an awareness of cultural differences to avoid barriers to productive and positive interaction. They find ways to increase the engagement and contribution of all team members. They plan and facilitate effective team meetings.

Appendix H

Round Two E-mail

Hello _____

Thank you again for your participation in this Delphi Study exploring counselor preparation and career readiness. Welcome to the second round of the study!

In round two you will be asked to rate your level of agreement on items identified by our Delphi members in round 1. You will be given the opportunity to modify or add items and clarify your responses if necessary at the end of each section of the survey. The round 2 survey should take approximately 15 to 20 minutes to complete. **Please complete the survey by Wednesday, March 11 11:59 EST.**

The link to the second round survey is below:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1Wakbujb8vZQ4gIXwk6FkBQrMsh4ktg0WT_bvahmQc0Y/viewform

As a reminder, your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You do not have to respond to any question that you do not wish to share an answer at any time during this study. I will be happy to answer any questions you may have regarding this study. If you have further questions about this project or other research related concerns, please contact me, Dr. Nicole DeRonck at nderonck@gmail.com or my doctoral advisor, Dr. Rachelle Pérusse at rachelle.perusse@uconn.edu. If you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this study, you may contact the University of Connecticut Institutional Review Board (IRB) at [860-486-8802](tel:860-486-8802). The IRB is a group of people who review research studies to protect the rights and welfare of research participants.

Thank you again for your help with this endeavor!

Respectfully

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Appendix I

Round Two Survey

Counselor Preparation and Career Readiness Delphi Study: Round 2

Thank you very much for your participation in this Delphi Study on Counselor Preparation and Career Readiness. Your time and contributions to this study are greatly appreciated. In this round of the study, responses from Round 1 have been collected and provide the content for subsequent rounds.

Please submit your responses to round two by Monday, March 9, 11:59 EST.

The survey for round two will be presented in three parts. Part A relates to practices used to prepare school counselors to conduct career counseling. Part B pertains to skills and concepts which promote career readiness. Part C concerns methods/venues used to teach data collection to promote career readiness.

Please note that you do not have to respond to any question that you do not want to answer. Your confidentiality will be maintained to the degree permitted by the technology used.

This study has been approved by The University of Connecticut Institutional Review Board (IRB Exemption # X14-188). If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Dr. Nicole DeRonck at nderonck@gmail.com.

PART A: Level of Agreement- Instructional Practices

Instructions: In round one, Delphi members identified the following 39 items considered necessary to prepare school counselors to conduct career counseling in grades K-12. Please rate your level of agreement with the items below, using a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). 1= Strongly Disagree 2= Disagree 3= Disagree Slightly 4= Neither Agree Nor Disagree 5= Agree Slightly 6= Agree 7=Strongly Agree You will have the opportunity to add or clarify any of your responses at the end of each section.

A school counselor prepared to conduct career counseling in grades K-12...

1. understands theories of career counseling in general

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
strongly disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	strongly agree

2. understands Super's Life Span Life Space Theory

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

3. understands Holland's Theory of Career Choice

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

4. understands Krumboltz Learning Theory of Career Counseling and Happenstance

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

5. understands Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

6. understands the narrative approach to career counseling

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

7. reads relevant empirical studies from career focused peer reviewed journals

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

8. is familiar with assessment

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

9. is able to interpret assessment results

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

10. is able to use results to plan interventions

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

11. has participated in practica

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

12. has participated in an internship

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

13. has participated in career counseling simulations

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

14. has participated in service learning in a career setting

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

15. has participated in reviewing case studies

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

16. can develop grade/age appropriate curriculum specific to career exploration/development

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

17. can develop curriculum in general

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

18. knows how to use the Occupational Outlook Handbook (OOH)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

19. is aware of labor market information

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

20. knows how to use technology related career tools (i.e., Naviance, Kuder, etc.)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

21. has general knowledge of use and evaluation of resources

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

22. has participated in online discussion as part of their career counseling class

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

23. has knowledge of portfolio development

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

24. has developed a portfolio

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

25. has tracked their own personal career path

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

26. can write persuasively

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

27. can write a research paper

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

28. understands how to plan for career development

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

29. understands how to design career development programming

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

30. understands the organization of career development

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

31. understand best practices in intervention

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

32. has taken a MS level career course

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

33. has taken a general career counseling course that uses examples from different fields

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

34. has taken a career course specific to school counseling

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

35. has knowledge of National Career Development Association (NCDA) Guidelines

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

36. has knowledge of American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Mindsets and Behaviors for College and Career Readiness

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

37. has studied the implications of multicultural counseling

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

38. understands the overlap between career counseling and personal counseling

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

39. is able to integrate career theory into personal theoretical orientation

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

1a. Please modify or add any additional items you see as necessary to prepare school counselors conduct career counseling in grades K-12



1b. Please use this space to clarify any answers from Part A as needed.



PART B: Skills and Concepts which Promote Career Readiness

Instructions: In round one, Delphi members identified the following 23 skills/concepts considered necessary for school counselors to be able to promote career readiness. Please rate your level of agreement with the items below, using a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). 1= Strongly Disagree 2= Disagree 3= Disagree Slightly 4= Neither Agree Nor Disagree 5= Agree Slightly 6= Agree 7=Strongly Agree

To be able to promote career readiness, school counselors....

1. understand links between career development, readiness and mental health

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

2. are aware of grants available (i.e., MS Kids 2 College, HS Access Grants)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

3. have knowledge of ASCA Standards

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

4. have knowledge of the ASCA Mindsets and Behaviors for College and Career Readiness

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

5. have knowledge of ethical standards

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

6. understand that not all people work for the same reasons

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

7. understand that not all people have the benefit of choosing a best career match

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

8. be aware of changing work/workforce in the 21st Century

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

9. understand the importance of career development and career education

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

10. understand that promoting career readiness is one of their main jobs

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

11. believe that all students should have career awareness, knowledge and skills from K-12

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

12. understand the ease of incorporating career counseling into all aspects of school counseling

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

13. recognize, understand and articulate factors that shape career development and impact career intervention

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

14. understand foundational theories and literature related to career development

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

15. are able to understand and guide career development activities using foundational theories

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

16. have knowledge of intervention models/strategies and how to apply them in a developmentally appropriate way

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

17. understand the interrelationship between college and career readiness

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

18. can rely on internship or practicum supervisor to teach career counseling

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

19. get practice doing career counseling in internship or practicum

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

20. understand that career development does not just occur in high school, but includes the elementary grades and beyond high school

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

21. are familiar with measures across career development related domains (i.e., interests, skills, values, etc.)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

22. have knowledge of eh systemic influences that effect careers (i.e., generational effects, career aspirations, school influences, etc.)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

23. understand that what kids observe in terms of the world of work make an impression (i.e., parents, own beliefs about coping with work, etc.)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

2a. Please modify or add any additional skills/concepts that you consider necessary for school counselors to be able to promote career readiness



2b. Please use this space to clarify any answers from Part B as needed.



PART C: Methods/Venues Used to Teach Data Collection Relating to Career Readiness

Instructions: In round one, Delphi members identified the following 9 methods/venues for teaching school counselors how to use data to show they are effectively promoting career readiness in graded

K-12. Please rate your level of agreement with the items below, using a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). 1= Strongly Disagree 2= Disagree 3= Disagree Slightly 4= Neither Agree Nor Disagree 5= Agree Slightly 6= Agree 7=Strongly Agree

School counselors learn how to use data to show they are effectively promoting career readiness...

1. by taking a required a research methodology course

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

2. by taking a required course in program evaluation

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

3. by taking a required a course in assessment

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

4. by taking an introduction to school counseling course that includes use of data as a required component

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

5. by embedding use of data into all counseling courses

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly agree strongly disagree

6. as part of practicum

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

7. as part of an internship

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

8. through coursework that requires students to design goals, measure and discuss them.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

9. through coursework that requires students to develop a comprehensive school counseling program (ASCA Model)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

3a. Please modify or add any additional methods/venues for teaching school counselors how to use data that you feel are necessary.

3b. Please use this space to clarify any answers from Part C as needed.

100%: You made it.

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Appendix J

Round Three E-Mail

Hi _____

Thank you again for your participation in this Delphi Study exploring counselor preparation and career readiness. Welcome to the third round of the study! There is good news, consensus has been formed on many items already so this survey is much shorter!

In round three you will be asked to rate your level of agreement on items that have not yet reached consensus. In this round you will be given the interquartile range and the median score for each item. If you find yourself outside the consensus on any item, it is ok. Just please be sure to indicate why. The round 3 survey should take approximately 15 minutes to complete. **Please complete the survey by Wednesday, March 25 11:59 EST.**

The link to the third round survey is below:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/11aMuRWIFg_XA6swep6jJ_ySLmpv84wg53Dtw0kW9zuo/viwwform?usp=send_form

As a reminder, your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You do not have to respond to any question that you do not wish to share an answer at any time during this study. I will be happy to answer any questions you may have regarding this study. If you have further questions about this project or other research related concerns, please contact me, Dr. Nicole DeRonck at nderonck@gmail.com or my doctoral advisor, Dr. Rachelle Pérusse at rachelle.perusse@uconn.edu. If you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this study, you may contact the University of Connecticut Institutional Review Board (IRB) at [860-486-8802](tel:860-486-8802). The IRB is a group of people who review research studies to protect the rights and welfare of research participants.

Thank you again for your help with this endeavor!

Respectfully

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Appendix K

Round Three Survey

Counselor Preparation and Career Readiness Delphi Study: Round 3

In round two, consensus was achieved among Delphi experts on 21 of the 37 identified items considered necessary to prepare school counselors to conduct career counseling in grades K-12 (56.7%). Two additional items were added by a member of the Delphi panel. Of the 23 skills/concepts considered necessary for school counselors to be able to promote career readiness, consensus was reached on 21 of the items (91.3%). Consensus was achieved on four out of nine methods/venues for teaching school counselors how to use data to show they are effectively promoting career readiness in graded K-12 (44.4%).

For round three of the study you will be asked to rate your level of agreement with the remaining items that have not yet met consensus. In a Delphi study, consensus is achieved when the median score on an item is greater than 6 or 7 and the interquartile range is less than or equal to 1.5.

The median is the middle number in a range of data when scores are sorted from lowest to highest. The interquartile range is defined as the difference between the first quartile and the third quartile of a set of data, or the difference between the middle 50% of the scores. An interquartile range of 1.5 or less suggests that the middle 50% of raters have responded similarly. Interquartile ranges that are larger than 1.5 suggest that there is more variability in responses.

For round three, you will be provided with the median and interquartile range obtained from round two for each item. You will have the opportunity, if necessary, to explain your reasoning for any items in which you have remained outside of the consensus.

Please submit your responses to round three by Sunday, March 23, 2015, 11:49 EST.

Please note that you do not have to respond to any question that you do not want to answer. Your confidentiality will be maintained to the degree permitted by the technology used.

This study has been approved by The University of Connecticut Institutional Review Board (IRB Exemption # X14-188). If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Dr. Nicole DeRonck at nderonck@gmail.com.

PART A: Level of Agreement- Instructional Practices

Instructions: The following 18 items have been identified as items considered necessary to prepare school counselors to conduct career counseling in grades K-12 but have not yet reached consensus. Please rate your level of agreement with the items below, using a scale of

1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). 1= Strongly Disagree 2= Disagree 3= Disagree Slightly 4= Neither Agree Nor Disagree 5= Agree Slightly 6= Agree 7=Strongly Agree

If your response remains outside of consensus, please explain why.

A school counselor prepared to conduct career counseling in grades K-12...

1. understands Super's Life Span Life Space Theory

Median= 6; Interquartile Range= 2

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

Comment #1

2. understands Krumboltz Learning Theory of Career Counseling and Happenstance

Median=6; Interquartile Range= 2

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

Comment #2

3. understands the narrative approach to career counseling

Median=7; Interquartile Range =3.5

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

Comment #3

4. reads relevant empirical studies from career focused peer reviewed journals

Median=6; Interquartile Range=2.5

strongly disagree strongly agree

Comment #4

5. has participated in service learning in a career setting

Median=4; Interquartile Range=3.5

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

Comment #5

6. knows how to use the Occupational Outlook Handbook (OOH)

Median= 6; Interquartile Range=2.5

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

Comment #6

7. is aware of labor market information

Median=7; Interquartile Range=2.5

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

Comment #7

8. has participated in online discussion as part of their career counseling class

Median=4; Interquartile Range=4

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

Comment #8

9. has knowledge of portfolio development

Median=5; Interquartile Range=3

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

Comment #9

10. has developed a portfolio

Median= 4; Interquartile Range=2

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

Comment #10

11. can write persuasively

Median=5; Interquartile Range=1

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

Comment #11

12. can write a research paper

Median= 5; Interquartile Range=1

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

Comment #12



13. understands the organization of career development

Median=5; Interquartile Range= 1.5

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

Comment #13



14. has taken a general career counseling course that uses examples from different fields

Median= 7; Interquartile Range =2

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

Comment #14



15. has taken a career course specific to school counseling

Median=3; Interquartile Range=4.5

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

Comment #15



16. has knowledge of National Career Development Association (NCDA) Guidelines

Median=6; Interquartile Range=3

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

Comment #16



17. understands systems theory

Median=N/A. Interquartile Range=N/A

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

Comment #17



18. understands detailed information on multicultural counseling

Median=N/A; Interquartile Range=N/A

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

Comment #18



PART B: Skills and Concepts which Promote Career Readiness

Instructions: The following 4 items have been identified as items considered necessary for school counselors to be able to promote career readiness but have not yet reached consensus. Please rate your level of agreement with the items below, using a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

1= Strongly Disagree 2= Disagree 3= Disagree Slightly 4= Neither Agree Nor Disagree 5= Agree Slightly 6= Agree 7=Strongly Agree

To be able to promote career readiness, school counselors....

1. are aware of grants available (i.e., MS Kids 2 College, HS Access Grants)

Median=5; Interquartile Range=2.5

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

Comment #B1



2. understand foundational theories and literature related to career development

Median=7; Interquartile Range=2

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

Comment #B2



3. are able to understand and guide career development activities using foundational theories

Median=6; Interquartile Range=2.5

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

Comment #B3



4. can rely on internship or practicum supervisor to teach career counseling

Median=3; Interquartile Range=3.5 Clarification: Internship as a main venue for learning to practice career counseling in schools.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

Comment #B4



PART C: Methods/Venues Used to Teach Data Collection Relating to Career Readiness

Instructions: The following 5 items have been identified as methods/venues for teaching school counselors how to use data to show they are effectively promoting career readiness in graded K-12 but have not yet reached consensus. Please rate your level of agreement with the items below, using a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

1= Strongly Disagree 2= Disagree 3= Disagree Slightly 4= Neither Agree Nor Disagree 5= Agree Slightly 6= Agree 7=Strongly Agree

School counselors learn how to use data to show they are effectively promoting career readiness...

1. by taking a required a research methodology course

Median=6; Interquartile Range= 4

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

Comment #C1

2. by taking a required course in program evaluation

Median=7; Interquartile Range=2

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

Comment #C2

3. by embedding use of data into all counseling courses

Median=4; Interquartile Range=1.5

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

Comment #C3



4. as part of practicum

Median=6; Interquartile Range=3

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

5. as part of an internship

Median=6; Interquartile Range=2

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

strongly disagree strongly agree

Comment #C5



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Appendix L

Distribution of Scores Round Two

Item	Number of Responses/Likert Scale Rating						
	Likert Scale						
	S. Disagree					S. Agree	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A school counselor prepared to conduct career counseling in grades K-12...							
	N= 5						
1. understands theories of career counseling in general	0	0	0	0	1	1	3
2. understands Super's Life Span Life Space Theory	0	0	0	1	0	2	2
3. understands Holland's Theory of Career Choice	0	0	0	0	0	3	2
4. understands Krumboltz Learning Theory of Career Counseling and Happenstance	0	0	0	1	2	1	1
5. understands Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT)	0	0	0	0	0	2	3
6. understands the narrative approach to career counseling	0	1	0	0	1	0	3
7. reads relevant empirical studies from career focused peer reviewed journals	0	0	1	0	0	2	2
8. is familiar with assessment	0	0	0	0	1	2	2
9. is able to interpret assessment results	0	0	0	0	0	2	3
10. is able to use results to plan Interventions	0	0	0	0	0	1	4
11. has participated in career counseling simulations	0	0	0	0	1	0	4
12. has participated in service learning in a career setting	0	0	1	2	0	0	2

13. has participated in reviewing case studies	0	0	0	0	0	1	4
14. can develop grade/age appropriate curriculum specific to career exploration/development	0	0	0	0	1	0	4
15. can develop curriculum in general	0	0	0	0	2	0	3
16. knows how to use the Occupational Outlook Handbook (OOH)	0	0	1	0	1	2	1
17. is aware of labor market information	0	0	0	1	1	0	3
18. knows how to use technology related career tools (i.e., Naviance, Kuder, etc.)	0	0	0	0	1	2	1
							N= 4
19. has general knowledge of use and evaluation of resources	0	0	0	0	0	3	2
20. has participated in online discussion as part of their career counseling class	1	1	0	2	0	0	1
21. has knowledge of portfolio development	0	0	1	0	2	0	2
22. has developed a portfolio	0	1	0	2	2	0	0
23. has tracked their own personal career path	0	0	0	0	1	1	3
24. can write persuasively	0	0	0	2	3	0	0
25. can write a research paper	0	0	1	1	3	0	0
26. understands how to plan for career development	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
27. understands how to design career development programming	0	0	0	0	0	1	3
							N= 4
28. understands the organization of career development	0	0	0	2	1	1	1

29. understand best practices in intervention	0	0	0	0	0	1	4
30. has taken a MS level career course	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
31. has taken a general career counseling course that uses examples from different fields	0	0	0	0	2	0	3
32. has taken a career course specific to school counseling	1	1	1	0	1	0	1
33. has knowledge of National Career Development Association (NCDA) Guidelines	0	0	1	0	1	1	2
34. has knowledge of American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Mindsets and Behaviors for College and Career Readiness	0	0	0	0	0	1	4
35. has studied the implications of multicultural counseling	0	0	0	0	1	1	3
36. understands the overlap between career counseling and personal counseling	0	0	0	0	0	2	3
37. is able to integrate career theory into personal theoretical orientation	0	0	0	0	1	1	3

To be able to promote career readiness, school counselors....

1. understand links between career development, readiness and mental health	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
2. are aware of grants available (ie., MS Kids 2 College, HS Access Grants)	0	0	1	0	2	1	1
3. have knowledge of ASCA Standards	0	0	0	0	1	0	4

4. have knowledge of the ASCA Mindsets and Behaviors for College and Career Readiness	0	0	0	0	0	1	4
5. have knowledge of ethical standards	0	0	0	0	0	1	4
6. understand that not all people work for the same reasons	0	0	0	0	0	1	4
7. understand that not all people have the benefit of choosing a best career match	0	0	0	0	1	0	4
8. be aware of changing work/workforce in the 21st Century	0	0	0	0	0	1	4
9. understand the importance of career development and career education	0	0	0	0	0	1	4
10. understand that promoting career readiness is one of their main jobs	0	0	0	0	1	1	3
11. believe that all students should have career awareness, knowledge and skills from K-12	0	0	0	0	0	1	4
12. understand the ease of incorporating career counseling into all aspects of school counseling	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
13. recognize, understand and articulate factors that shape career development and impact career intervention	0	0	0	0	1	2	1
14. understand foundational theories and literature related to career development	0	0	0	1	0	1	3
15. are able to understand and guide career development activities using foundational theories	0	0	0	1	1	1	2
16. have knowledge of intervention models/strategies and how to apply them in a developmentally appropriate way	0	0	0	0	0	1	4

17. understand the interrelationship between college and career readiness	0	0	0	0	1	1	3
18. can rely on internship or practicum supervisor to teach career counseling	2	0	1	0	1	0	0
19. get practice doing career counseling in internship or practicum	0	0	0	0	1	2	2
20. understand that career development does not just occur in high school, but includes the elementary grades and beyond high school	0	0	0	0	0	1	4
21. are familiar with measures across career development related domains (i.e., interests, skills, values, etc.)	0	0	0	0	1	1	3
22. have knowledge of eh systemic influences that effect careers (i.e., generational effects, career aspirations, school influences, etc.)	0	0	0	0	0	1	4
23. understand that what kids observe in terms of the world of work make an impression (i.e., parents, own beliefs about coping with work, etc.)	0	0	0	0	0	0	5

School counselors learn how to use data to show they are effectively promoting career readiness...

1. by taking a required a research methodology course	1	0	0	0	1	1	2
2. by taking a required course in program evaluation	0	0	0	1	0	1	3
3. by taking a required a course in assessment	0	0	0	0	1	1	3
4. by taking an introduction to school counseling course that includes use of data as a required component	0	0	0	0	1	0	4

5. by embedding use of data into all counseling courses	0	0	0	2	2	1	0
6. as part of practicum	0	1	0	0	2	1	1
7. as part of internship	0	0	0	0	2	2	1
8. through coursework that requires students to design goals, measure and discuss them.	0	0	0	0	1	1	3
9. through coursework that requires students to develop a comprehensive school counseling program (ASCA Model)	0	0	0	0	1	1	3

Appendix M

Distribution of Scores Round Three

Item	Number of Responses/Likert Scale Rating N= 6						
	Likert Scale						
	S. Disagree			S. Agree			
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A school counselor prepared to conduct career counseling in grades K-12...							
1. understands Super's Life Span Life Space Theory	0	0	0	0	2	1	3
2. understands Krumboltz Learning Theory of Career Counseling and Happenstance	0	0	1	0	3	1	1
3. understands the narrative approach to career counseling	0	0	0	2	0	2	2
4. reads relevant empirical studies from career focused peer reviewed journals	0	0	1	2	0	2	1
5. has participated in service learning in a career setting	0	1	1	1	2	1	0
6. knows how to use the Occupational Outlook Handbook (OOH)	0	0	0	0	1	3	2
7. is aware of labor market information	0	0	0	1	0	0	5
8. has participated in online discussion as part of their career counseling class	2	1	0	1	1	0	1
9. has knowledge of portfolio development	0	0	0	3	0	2	1
10. has developed a portfolio	0	1	0	3	1	0	1
11. can write persuasively	0	0	0	0	3	3	0
12. can write a research paper	0	0	0	0	2	4	0
13. understands the organization of career development	0	0	0	0	1	3	2

14. has taken a general career counseling course that uses examples from different fields	0	0	0	1	0	1	4
15. has taken a career course specific to school counseling	0	3	0	0	2	0	1
16. has knowledge of National Career Development Association (NCDA) Guidelines	0	0	0	0	1	2	3

To be able to promote career readiness, school counselors....

1. are aware of grants available (i.e., MS Kids 2 College, HS Access Grants)	0	0	0	1	2	3	0
2. understand foundational theories and literature related to career development	0	0	0	0	0	1	5
3. are able to understand and guide career development activities using foundational theories	0	0	0	0	1	1	4
4. can rely on internship or practicum supervisor to teach career counseling	2	1	1	1	1	0	0

School counselors learn how to use data to show they are effectively promoting career readiness...

1. by taking a required a research methodology course	0	0	0	1	0	4	1
2. by taking a required course in program evaluation	0	0	0	2	0	1	3
3. by embedding use of data into all counseling courses	1	0	0	0	2	3	0
4. as part of practicum	0	0	0	1	3	1	1
5. as part of internship	0	0	0	0	1	2	3

Appendix N

Expert Recommendations

Recommendations from the Expert Panelists by Research Question¹

A school counselor prepared to conduct career counseling in grades K-12...

- understands theories of career counseling in general
- understands Holland's Theory of Career Choice
- understands Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT)
- is familiar with assessment
- is able to interpret assessment results
- is able to use results to plan interventions
- has participated in career counseling simulations
- has participated in reviewing case studies
- can develop grade/age appropriate curriculum specific to career exploration/development
- can develop curriculum in general
- knows how to use the Occupational Outlook Handbook (OOH)
- is aware of labor market information
- knows how to use technology related career tools (i.e., Naviance, Kuder, etc.)
- has general knowledge of use and evaluation of resource
- has tracked their own personal career path
- can write a research paper
- *understands how to plan for career development²*
- understands how to design career development programming
- understands the organization of career development
- understand best practices in intervention
- *has taken a MS level career course*
- has taken a general career counseling course that uses examples from different fields
- has knowledge of National Career Development Association (NCDA)
- Guidelines has knowledge of American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Mindsets and Behaviors for College and Career Readiness
- has studied the implications of multicultural counseling
- understands the overlap between career counseling and personal counseling is able to integrate career theory into personal theoretical orientation

To be able to promote career readiness, school counselors....

- *understand links between career development, readiness and mental health*
- have knowledge of ASCA Standards
- have knowledge of the ASCA Mindsets and Behaviors for College and Career Readiness
- have knowledge of ethical standards

- understand that not all people work for the same reasons
- understand that not all people have the benefit of choosing a best career match
- be aware of changing work/workforce in the 21st Century
- understand the importance of career development and career education
- understand that promoting career readiness is one of their main jobs
- believe that all students should have career awareness, knowledge and skills from K-12
- *understand the ease of incorporating career counseling into all aspects of school counseling*
- recognize, understand and articulate factors that shape career development and impact career intervention
- understand foundational theories and literature related to career development
- are able to understand and guide career development activities using foundational theories
- have knowledge of intervention models/strategies and how to apply them in a developmentally appropriate way
- understand the interrelationship between college and career readiness
- get practice doing career counseling in internship or practicum
- understand that career development does not just occur in high school, but includes the elementary grades and beyond high school
- are familiar with measures across career development related domains (i.e., interests, skills, values, etc.)
- have knowledge of the systemic influences that effect careers (i.e., generational effects, career aspirations, school influences, etc.)
- *understand that what kids observe in terms of the world of work make an impression (i.e., parents, own beliefs about coping with work, etc.)*

School counselors learn how to use data to show they are effectively promoting career readiness...

- by taking a required a research methodology course
- by taking a required a course in assessment
- by taking an introduction to school counseling course that includes use of data as a required component
- as part of internship through coursework that requires students to design goals, measure and discuss them.
- through coursework that requires students to develop a comprehensive school counseling program (ASCA Model)

¹Items indicated in italics met unanimous consensus (median 7, interquartile range 0)