Reimagining Integration in Counselor Educator Doctoral Training: The Complement of Convictions, Contextualized Expression, and Pedagogy

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Christian doctoral students, as the next generation of faculty, must be well-equipped to teach integration. This article provides a framework to understand Christian integration in counseling as an outworked phenomenon that is expressed from personal convictions in a specific context. Six key factors that influence the development of Christian counselors' convictions are explored, including worldview, spiritual formation, relationships, counseling theory, view of learning, and educational context. Subsequently, a substantive pedagogical response is outlined that includes practical teaching assignments to facilitate the growth of future doctoral students and master's level students.

God has created a world within which we are to explore and become masterful caretakers (Willard, 1998). As Proverbs 25:2 tells us, "It is the glory of God to conceal a thing, but the honour of kings… to search [it] out" (KJV). With faculty-mentors, students may contend with the integration of Christian faith and psychology and subsequently form their convictions. This complex task includes curiously and passionately exploring and discovering, unearthing and honoring, and questioning and assimilating modes of being and methods of helping. The question we address is how best to facilitate such a task.

At first glance, one can mistake psychology/counseling and Christian faith as two completely divergent arenas despite their intent to address a common concern—the wellbeing of the human mind, body, and soul (Johnson, 2011; Tan, 2001). In reductionistic brevity, psychology's conception of wellbeing centers on a healthy self that thrives, while evangelical Christianity espouses wellbeing and thriving as a byproduct of a saving and restorative relationship with God and its fruit (Pan, Deng, Tsai, & Yuan, 2013; Prochaska & Norcross, 2018), a state the scriptures refer to as "blessedness" (Willard, 2009). With the recognition that many views and models have been advanced to reconcile psychology and

theology (e.g., Eck, 1996; Johnson, 2011; Moon, 1997) and that debate continues, it can be a daunting task to teach Christian integration in counseling. Into this debate we build on the work of Devers (2013), Strawn, Bland, and Flores (2018), and Greggo (2016) to assert a holistic conceptualization of integration stemming from the embodied person who has convictions formed in their tradition and context and subsequently expresses convictions contextually. Finally, we offer a pedagogical outworking of this understanding of integration to provide a model doctoral level class on integration that aims to prepare future counselor educators for their own teaching.

Integration as convictions, contextualized expression, and pedagogy

A personal Christian faith is not the same as an academic discipline. Surely both inform us, challenge us, and enrich us, but if God is the author of all things and simultaneously loves, redeems, and binds us to himself, then our faith is preeminent (Psalm 49:15, Galatians 3:14, Hebrews 12:2) and is interwoven throughout our academic contexts. Acknowledging the preeminence of Christ in us and the call of living unto God, Milacci (2003) has said of integration,

> How can I integrate that which already lies at the core of my being? To me, this seems no more plausible than asking someone to integrate their gender or culture

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into every part of life: Whether or not these kinds of core elements are consciously acknowledged, they are always present. A more appropriate question might be, "How do I determine when to be explicit and when to be implicit about my spirituality? (p. 157; as cited in Sites, Garzon, Milacci, & Boothe, 2009).

Following Malicci's (2003) perspective, Jones (2006) aptly asserts that "our choice is never whether to do integration, but rather what we will be doing integration with" (p. 258). In other words, Christ in us is not an option to pick up or put down; His impact is constant. What we "do integration with" is all of our being, even when we do a disservice to Christ through our expression. Therefore, we might say integration is embodied—it is literally in our mind, body, and soul. Devers (2013) followed in the path of Farnsworth (1985) and Bouma-Prediger (1990) to recognize the whole person and the formation process of counselor integration. Devers (2013) highlights the physiology of our experience preceding cognition and forming the "basis of the cognitive, affective and behavioral components of attitude" (p. 141). Integration is dependent on our bodily response and occurs within our bodies—it is, therefore, *embodied* (Devers, 2013).

Psychology and faith both understand the systemic reality of internal perception influencing the external expression, while the external expression simultaneously influences internal perception (Thompson, 2010). This does not divide the person, but rather illuminates the intricacies of embodied development. Jones (2006) highlights the process of body-knowing as he asserts the human capacity to know something personally (*in-your-bones*) as complementary to knowing cognitively (communicable theory or fact). Jones (2006) contends that knowing is "personal and propositional" (p. 258). The external-internal dynamic is captured in Greggo's (2016) assertion that a counselor's internal convictions are shaped by what contact is made with any facet of the world through our embodied self, be it spiritually nourishing or otherwise (Devers, 2013). Greggo (2016) contends the centrality of convictions: "When counseling, our convictions regarding

Scripture, science, Christianity, wisdom, and the Holy Spirit do matter—a great deal" (p. 27). Greggo (2016) maintains that "trusting one's gut" to guide clinical interpretation and decisions as a counselor is the product of prior learning and experience that influences self-awareness and convictions. It is critical to recognize the broad scope of learning experiences that include faith traditions within which we grew up (Strawn et al., 2018), the choices we have made, formative memories that shape us, and much more.

Secondly, Greggo (2016) places the outworked expression of counselors' integration in the concept of contextualizing, by which he means creatively presenting one's self and one's faith in a manner that a person, a situation, a faith tradition, or group might effectively partake in the message. Integration has been discussed as a relational, embodied, dialogical process (McMinn & Neff, 2019; Sandage & Brown, 2015; Strawn et al., 2018) where the interaction of persons is the context and informs the product. We contend that what is occurring for counselors is a contextualization that always requires convictions (history, context, formation), bodies (behavior), and dialogue. (The dialogue may of course be with literature as well as with persons.) This is an embodied, systemic understanding of convictions and contextualized expression that involves implicit knowing, propositional information, and interaction/dialogue with context.

If we understand that our values and beliefs all stand upon a bedrock of convictions, then we can appreciate how everything we do must be an outworking of our convictions in a context. We must also recognize that our convictions are never static, but continuously and reciprocally shaped by what and how we engage. As we relate in any context, what we do and say is bounded by convictions and serves to position us in relationship to people, facts, emotions, and other elements that will naturally impact our convictions in a systemic process.

The critical question when attempting to teach integration is, "What forces are noticeably shaping students' (and our) convictions and contextualized expressions?" The list is long and begins with the nuance of personal history and tradition (Strawn et al., 2018), which deserves continued extended discussion that is beyond our scope. Other critical

influences on convictions within counselor education include: worldview and epistemology, spiritual formation, relationships, counseling theory, view of learning, and educational context. The systemic interaction of these six domains shape convictions and contextual expression in a recursive process. This gives rise to the question, *How can counseling students be meaningfully exposed to influences that are helpful for their development and personal growth in integration?*

Six Crictical Influences on Convictions Within Counselor Education

Worldview. Dallas Willard (2009) points to the crucial impact of worldview,

> A worldview is, therefore, a biological necessity for human beings, because we act, whether consciously or not, with reference to a whole (a "world"). Our "view" of that whole determines what we shall undertake to deal with or omit in our actions day by day and hour by hour. It dictates what we will or will not count on as resources and recognize as dangers. It determines our aims and our means and, eventually, the quality of life and the kind of person we will become. (Willard, 2009, p. 43-44)

A Christian worldview contends that there is a reality of human suffering and thriving that is only fully understood through relational faith experiences that depend on spiritual realities (Philippians 3:7-11, Colossians 1:9-14). If God's thinking about and toward us is allowed to percolate experientially and propositionally (through worship, the Spirit, biblical study, etc.), it will affect how we in turn think about Him—altering our core convictions. Psychology constructed a counter position, relying upon a modernist science of methodological naturalism, to provide interpretations through positivistic empiricism (Entwistle, 2009; Johnson, 2011). Psychology operates in measured reason and human-centered experience. Concerning the scientist of modernity, A. W. Tozer (1982) stated simply that "he has lost God amid the wonders of His world" (p. 13). The difference in these formative worldviews weaves through all subsequent endeavors, shaping the convictions of each person.

A worldview is unavoidable or, in Willard's (2009) words, "everyone has a worldview" (p. 43). Due to this, Johnson (2011) suggests integration begins with the task of clarifying the worldview presuppositions behind any psychology and critically comparing them with presuppositions from a Christian worldview. However, this is an inherently difficult task, as modern-day secular presuppositions have subtly supplanted Christians ones in the modern West, and Willard (2009) reminds us that much of our worldview "lies outside our consciousness in the moment of action, embedded in our body and in its social environment" (p. 44). As Christian educators, our challenge is to become reflective enough to contend with the dissonance that arises in unearthing the true convictions that shape our actions (Johnson, 2011). Scott (2018) provides a timely reminder that a comprehensive understanding of self from Scripture undergirds the worldview that upholds a Christian counselor or educator's professional identity. If a God-oriented professional identity is built on God-informed convictions, then the educator's approach to all subsequent tasks will be God-altered. The convictions of a Christian educator lead them to ask and respond to the question, *How can I express who God says I am in Him?,* rather than continuing to ask the secular question, *Who am I and how do I want to express it?* It is clear that worldview impacts convictions and contextualized expression, and as such, it is profoundly influential for counseling students.

Spiritual formation. Sites et al. (2009) studied student-nominated professors for their impact on students' learning of integration and found a confounding issue; namely, that a professor's ontological foundation (their spiritual essence) created a dominant impact. They propose the question, "If integration involves the natural out flowing of a person's spiritual essence, what exactly is being integrated?" (p. 37). As Sites et al. (2009) suggest, "Integration does not start with scholarly acumen; rather it starts with each faculty member's personal spiritual depth as expressed in their ontological foundation" (p. 37). The pertinent question, as we have seen in our discussion of convictions, is how one's ontological foundation is created.

Orthodox Christianity entails a redemptive narrative that recognizes our creation as image bearers of God (Genesis 1:27), the divisive rupture of the fall (Genesis 3), Christ's redeeming sacrifice (Ephesians 1:7), and the coming day of consummated lives, culture, and relationship with God (Revelation 21:1-8). To live with this narrative as a functional directive certainly changes the way a life is spent. Spiritual formation has a long tradition and entails a journey of growth in faith, hope, and love, where one's place as the Beloved of God is fully known (Isaiah 62:12). From a place of beloved worthiness and ongoing transformation of self, one moves towards the point that self might be given away in authentic intimacy and mutuality (Conn, 1999). Conn suggests spiritual formation entails an active discernment of self-knowledge and attempting to see Christ, to commune with Him, and experience Him seeing us. Spiritual formation, then, is a process that orients and redeems human life rather than being a set of therapeutic techniques (Entwistle, 2009). However, spiritual formation requires a patient, committed journey towards a "renewed mind" (Romans 12:2). An underpinning Christian worldview, a process of spiritual formation through sanctification by the Spirit, and conscious co-operation to renew the mind culminate in lasting change to convictions and their expression.

Relationships. In groups, dyads, and many other expressions, relationship exerts a tremendous influence on us to shape convictions. The attachment work of Bowlby and Ainsworth suggests significant evidence that relationships hold the power to heal and transform (Bretherton, 1992). Indeed, when working as a counselor, it is rare to progress through a counseling session, let alone a clinical day, without a client referencing the impact of a relationship. It would be foolish to overlook the impact of relationships in learning integration. Sorenson highlighted the importance of relationship when he conducted a series of four studies exploring integration in graduate schools of psychology (Sorenson, Derflinger, Bufford, & McMinn, 2004). The first study confirmed the importance of attachment relationships in the integration process, finding that students' therapists had a greater influence than professors. A second study focusing on the role of faculty found that "evidence of a professor's ongoing process in a personal relationship with God is

the single most important dimension that accounts for what students found helpful for their own integration of clinical psychology and faith" (p. 541; cited in Garzon & Hall, 2012). While students' development demands the focus, the educator is a guide and fellow sojourner in the process. The research by Sorenson et al. (2004) suggests that the greatest tool the counselor or educator can utilize to hold learners in a place of tension between the questions they may not yet know how to ask and the answers they are striving towards is to use him- or her- very self. The educator's use of self is crucial to create a safe attachment environment within which students explore, discover, and grow.

Sites et al. (2009) suggested the development of a faith-integrative approach to counseling that seems to be a process more *caught* than taught by way of the "incarnational" nature of the professor-student relationship. According to Sites et al. (2009), the emotional transparency, availability, and accessibility of the professor, as well as their sense of humor, contributed to integrative learning and suggests "professors need to strive to know students more personally and learn what is important to them" (p. 29).

From this vantage point, Jesus was a scientific forerunner of relational change when it came to his disciples. Unsurprisingly, supervisors have been identified as key mentors that can both model and explicitly support integration opportunities (Barto, 2018; Walker, Gorsuch, Tan, & Otis, 2008). Regardless of their official role, a humble mentor who "lives and breathes" integration through conceptual (concepts and ideas) and experiential integration (personal, spiritual, and emotional growth) is highly formative for students (Hall & Porter, 2004; Hall, Ripley, Garzon, & Mangis, 2009; Matthias, 2008). It is clear that relationships are a dynamic system that can powerfully shape our convictions and form the contexts of expression and dialogue.

Counseling theory. Extensive study in any discipline will undoubtedly impact one's core convictions, which are filled with assumptions about human flourishing and well-being. Indeed, all theories have a philosophical underpinning that exerts tremendous influence on techniques and definitions of client improvement (Jones & Butman, 2011). As counseling theory and practice is studied, it

exerts a strong influence on foundational questions like, "What makes a person?" Answers to questions such as this range between direct contrast or agreement with a Christian worldview. If educators and students alike are not aware of this influence, the impact could be dramatic. For example, a Christian student may over time adopt a purely scientific conceptualization of persons or subjective view of morality that will cause great difficulty in the work of Christian integration. Beyond this, further pressure on convictions is exerted by issues such as common factors for change (therapeutic alliance, catharsis, etc.) and the use of ethical codes (Grencavage & Norcross, 1990). Pressure may be subtle because there are often parallels within a Christian worldview for concepts such as empathy and non-maleficence. We are not suggesting these influences are inherently bad—in fact, they can often serve as a corrective to poor theology—but great discernment is required to understand the influences being experienced. Continued evaluation is a large task considering most master's programs require at least 48 credit hours of study (and doctoral programs require more), and it is unlikely that even the best student will maintain critical discernment. This bolsters the argument for continued spiritual formation that deliberately focuses on shaping Christian conviction and expression.

View of learning. To facilitate Christian integration in counseling, multiple authors have advocated incorporating specific approaches to teaching, training, and practice of integration in masters or doctoral level programs (e.g., Eck, White, & Entwistle, 2016; Garzon & Hall, 2012; McMinn, Moon, & McCormick, 2009; Sites et al., 2009). Those who are serious about integration hold a consensus that this work cannot be done ad-hoc or without careful consideration, with a key question being "Who is responsible for integration learning?" Integration is a task of shaping convictions, involving the embodied person experiencing phenomena through their senses and subsequent cognitive work. This type of learning provides an experience that shapes the whole person—cognitively, behaviorally, affectively, and spiritually (Hoover, Giambatista, Sorenson, & Boomer, 2010). McAuliffe (2011) asserts that students' interest and effort must be elicited before the substantive reflection, reasoning, and testing that lie at

the heart of learning will occur. This means that the shaping of convictions occurs naturally as interest and effort are sparked when students deliberately engage materials or discussions. Students may not be aware of their agency in this process, and ultimately, it is students that perform their own internal integration (Lawrence, Burton, & Nwosu, 2005). Lawrence et al.'s study of student experiences of integrating faith and learning found only 19 of 94 behavioral statements given by students located the process as a behavior of the student. Students put the onus on professors to usher them into a "staging area" where they might learn because their interest and effort have been evoked. This suggests the underlying convictions of many students lend towards a passivity that is not conducive to their active participation in reshaping their convictions that underlie contextualized expressions of Christian faith.

Educational context. The process of counselor education occurs within the context of an educational institution, and a temporal climate, with unique relationships to a Christian worldview. Currently, counselor education primarily occurs in institutional contexts where logical positivism has given way to postmodern constructivism and a technological world of social media relationships (Garzon & Hall, 2012). The millennial student context challenges the notions of absolute truth claims to the point that suggesting which "stage" the student should be on to experience a shaping of their convictions is problematic (White, Entwistle, & Eck, 2016). Beyond philosophical concerns, further pressures, are exerted by financial goals, a programs clinical orientation, and accrediting bodies such as CACREP. Into this context, a number of Christian schools have proposed a plan or model for integration within the school (McMinn & Goetsch, 2013), but regardless of how an academic institution may position itself regarding the ideals and values of integration, specific professors execute this task in dramatically different ways (Ripley, Garzon, Hall, Mangis, & Murphy, 2009). Given the range of experiences educators provide in different contexts and the subjective lens each student brings, it is clear that Christian students of counseling will find the potential for their convictions to be shaped in myriad ways.

Pedagogy—setting "the stage" for learning

Having reviewed these six factors, how can counseling students be meaningfully exposed to influences that are helpful for their development and personal growth in integration? This question is not new in kind, as Hall (2004) and Garzon and Hall (2012) have called for educational methodologies with specific application to aid in the process of integrative learning. Here we transition into both a pedagogy and a specific application to join with others educators that take seriously the role of facilitating students' development in integration. This is no small challenge when educators simultaneously attempt to guide students in acquisition and application of counseling theory, personal and spiritual growth, transformation with "truth in the inmost parts" (Psalm 51:6), and an appropriate contextualized expression of that truth. Therefore, a pedagogy that considers formative contact with the influences of worldview, spiritual formation, relationships, counseling theory, learning theory, and educational context is critical. And, if we follow the challenge of Milacci (2003; as cited in Sites et al., 2009) to accept that we cannot put down our integration, then we must wrestle with how to model integration in the pedagogical domain. As studies exploring integration and the integration of faith and learning have amassed, so have conceptualizations of an effective professor of integration (Eck, White, & Entwistle, 2016; Moon, 2012; Sites et al., 2009; Sorenson et al., 2004; Strawn & Hammer, 2013). What does a professor who teaches the art of integrating counseling and Christian faith do, what are they like as a person, what is their philosophical foundation, the state of their spiritual formation, and the discussion they promote?

Lawrence et al. (2005) argue a primary task in integration is to "think Christianly" (shaped convictions), and therefore challenges abound with millennial students, as they have difficulty stating what they believe, are less tied to specific beliefs or doctrines, and are more likely to blend their beliefs with other cultures or religions. Eck et al. (2016) note that teaching pedagogy must adapt to generational changes, perhaps offering application of integration earlier, allowing development of personal perspectives, and facilitating application of integration to students' own lives. We suggest Watson and Eveleigh's (2014) problem-based learning has much to offer in this regard, transitioning the educator from knowledge provider to solution consultant and mentor. To utilize such strategies sets the stage for student learning through interest and effort and places the locus of control back with the student to wrestle through a process of embodied engagement where convictions are formed and their contextual expression is altered. Throughout the process, the educator implicitly, and at times explicitly, addresses students' convictions, phenomenology, and broader worldview so that students understand the lens from which they interpret the world and so they may seek adjustment as they learn (Dodge, Holtzman, van Hulst, & Yanow, 2016). In a reciprocal process, contextualized expression through experiential learning impacts the development of convictions, and these convictions inform further expression throughout the learning process.

As we have seen, the relational environment within which learning occurs is important (Sorenson et al., 2004). To create an environment that is conducive to learning and forming convictions, we endeavor to be mindful of "the person of the student" in the classroom, locating them within their zone of proximal development (Bain, 2004; Vygotsky, 1978). We do this so students might share their current convictions and allow us to facilitate the extension of existing schemas (Malott, Hall, Sheely-Moore, Krell, & Cardaciotto, 1994). The educator models client-centeredness by being learner-centered, attuning to student needs and offering an engaging, respectful, warm, and welcoming learning environment (Palmer, 1998). This approach helps "set the stage" and has been shown to increase student motivation, ability to engage in higher-level cognitive processing, and openness and enthusiasm toward content (Allen, Witt, & Wheeless, 2006; Ambrose, Bridges, Di Pietro, Lovett, & Norman, 2010; Christensen & Menzel, 1998; Malott et al., 1994; McAuliffe, 2011; Wilson, 2006). In this learner-centered environment, rapport is built with students who learn to trust the educator as accessible and present. In this manner, a supportive, challenging, and dialogical classroom environment provides a predictable scaffold for learning and the context for the educator to interweave the six influential factors discussed above.

Table 1

Class assignments for doctoral level students

Assign. Type	Assignment Title	Assignment Pedagogy
DB1	What is integration?	Various: reading, writing, dialogue
DB2	Integration as personal knowledge	Various: video, writing, dialogue
DB3	The process of learning integration	Various: reading, writing, dialogue
DB4	The challenge of "teaching" integration	Various: reading, writing, dialogue
DB5	Identity and integration	Various: reading, writing, dialogue
CA1	Personal knowledge challenge	Integration genogram, presentation
CA2	Spiritual formation task	Experiential task, report
CA3	Evaluation of case study through applied models	Case-study evaluation, treatment plan creation
CA4	Demeanor and person of the professor	Creative product, experiential discussion
CA5	Pedagogy and integration formulation paper	Written paper, peer-discussion

A Complete Doctoral Class

Utilizing a reflexive practice of consulting integration and pedagogy literature and personal experiences, the authors present a model doctoral level class on integration. The class focuses on expanding students' embodiment of integration by shaping their convictions and allowing them to practice and enact contextualized expressions. We add to the current literature by preparing educators to teach counseling doctoral students how Christian integration can be facilitated for future students. The class presented is called: "Teaching Christian Integration."

Learning outcomes. The class is designed to achieve the following five learning outcomes: a) students will report their internal convictions regarding integration have been changed for the better, b) students will demonstrate contextualized expression of integration and appropriate pedagogy, c) students will report confidence in and appreciation for their role in setting the stage of learning for future students, d) students will have practical tools from which they can adapt their own teaching of integration, and e) students will have grown in their love for the Lord.

The assignments. The syllabus we propose is highly flexible and can be adapted for use in a traditional, online, or combined classroom and within a regular or protracted semester. Here we outline the class and detail three core assignments in detail (the authors will provide a full copy of the original syllabus upon request). As with most classes, core texts are selected to provide critical supporting knowledge and cognitive scaffolding. We have selected Entwistle's (2015) *Integrative Approaches to Psychology and Christianity* and Johnson's (2010) *Psychology and Christianity: Five Views*. A detailed discussion of each is beyond the scope of our discussion, but they undergird the learning environment we wish to set for students. Subsequently, we suggest articles from the growing integration literature and beyond.

The class timeline is sequenced by developmental need, and the assignments are deliberately selected to simultaneously expose students to new experiences and promote rich dialogue whilst providing them safety, empowerment, and challenge. A semi-linear sequence of learning follows this path: a) understanding the integration debate and its components, b) recognizing one's own development in, and relationship with, integration, c) engaging spiritual formation, d) evaluating current models and theories, e) discerning how the person of the integrator impacts the process, f) considering the pedagogy and relationships of integration, and g) formalizing a personal and theoretical position regarding integration and its instruction.

Beyond the safe, discursive, and experiential class setting described above, five online discussion boards (DB) are recommended (see Table 1) where students prepare an original

post (approximately 250 words) and respond to one original post, selecting the one they found most engaging. Students' responses include why the original post they responded to engaged them. You may opt to adapt the DB prompts for other formats such as small group discussions, class debates, and "thinking chains" (a method that expands and deepens reflective thought as one student speaks, the next finds an element they agree with from the first and expands on it, and subsequent students do the same).

Five core assignments (CA) are timed within the class to coincide with readings and DBs to continue students' developmental experience. The CAs are deliberately creative, experiential, and attend to the six factors mentioned above to prepare emerging educators for the realities they will face. We outline three of the CAs below, and the reader can review them all in Table 1.

CA1: *Personal knowledge challenge* is designed to help students critically reflect and situate themselves within their own integration development. Students do this by completing an "integration genogram" that explores the philosophical and epistemological basis they hold regarding integration by tracing relationships and other key influences. Students are instructed to include at least seven individuals (parents, teachers, pastors, friends), or influences (church, etc.) over three generations to depict their integration heritage. Students' products may take any number of creative forms but will consider both explicit and implicit ways they have come to understand integration. A digital picture is required for submission along with participation in a small-group peer-discussion, where central themes from the genograms are shared in confidence, and peers are invited to provide supportive reflections. (Anecdotally, one of the authors finds this a very powerful learning experience for the students, and it can be adapted to fit with classroom and student needs.) Students are provided with access to Galindo, Boomer, and Reagan's (2006) genogram workbook to help formulate their assignment.

A three page paper is also required that helps students articulate their findings. The goal and prompts for the paper are as follows: "Your goal is to articulate your narrative, history, and bias towards integration in a manner

that displays your intentional effort to understand how they will impact you throughout this course and how you are approaching it now. Utilize this opportunity to train your reflective capacity." Prompts for this assignment are as follows: 1) How has my faith tradition shaped my view of how I should know things? 2) What have I learnt about the validity of science and its place in relation to faith? 3) How do I decide what I know? 4) What preconceived ideas do I have about integration and its importance? 5) How has my clinical work demonstrated (or not) my core convictions about faith and persons? 6) What is stopping this paper being an easy thing to write? Within the paper, students are encouraged to be candid to enable their own development and prepare them for their work as educators and counselors.

This assignment accomplishes four main tasks: 1) students grapple with how their convictions have been shaped and contextualized to date, 2) they cultivate an appreciation for the role of epistemology and worldview, 3) they begin to see integration as a holistic and embodied process, and 4) they are invited to consider their agency in developing their integration.

CA2: *Spiritual formation report* is an experiential process that students are invited to enter having read about and discussed in class the purpose and value of spiritual formation. Students are guided into the process as early as possible in the semester, and the due date is towards the end of the semester to allow for maximum exposure. They are asked to read Coe's (2000) article that discusses St. John of the Cross' insights on developmental spirituality and O'Conner's (2002) article that explores the concept of a "Spiritual Dark Night." The final submission is an 8-10 page report that covers two domains: 1) A reflection on their own spiritual journey, and 2) reflections on the following prompts: a) Describe your experiences with the Purgation stage. How did you come to experience God and does it align with St. John of the Cross' description of *love and pleasure*? b) What "characterological sin" has God begun to transform for you in this stage? What was/is this process like for you? c) Considering the framework of the Dark Night of the Senses, how has/is God transforming your "love of God for pleasure's sake to a love of God for love's sake"? d) Describe

your experience of equipoise. e) How have you experienced the "neurotic temptation" (p. 303) of the Dark Night? f) Describe your experience of purgative contemplation and the role spiritual disciplines have for you and how they have impacted your spiritual journey? Students then reflect on their experience of the assignment's spiritual formation process, guided by the following prompts: 1) What has this process been like for you? What have you discovered and what aspects of your journey do you wish to explore for further "integration" in your life? 2) What are ways you understand St. John of the Cross integrating spirituality and "psychology" as it was understood in his time? 3) To what degree to you find a love in yourself for your own spiritual development, and why might this be? A final requirement for CA2 is a list of dates the student returned to this spiritual exercise to read, reflect, and write to help set the context for students that this is a progressive and developmental experience. This assignment can be a welcome relief from traditional academic study and powerfully achieves three aims: 1) this assignment experientially impacts students' convictions, potentially causing dissonance and intrigue, and underscores the notion that integration occurs in all domains, 2) students are challenged to consider that counseling, personal life, and education cannot be separated out in regards to integration, but specific contextualized expressions of integration can be, and 3) students are active in their own spiritual formation. For this assignment, we encourage educators to actively and consistently remind, encourage, and support students of their purpose and task. It may be of benefit to devote class time to process students' current experiences, challenges, and progress in the assignment.

CA4: *Demeanor and person of the professor* requires student activity and dialogue with a Christian counseling educator that generates experiential learning. Students are required to spend a minimum of one hour with a Christian counseling educator discussing personal development in integration. The assignment emphasizes experiencing the contextualized expression of an experienced other, self-reflection, synthesis, and planning. Given the primacy of relationships in safety and mentoring, it is vital that students both experience and reflect upon contact with more mature integrators. The end product of this assignment is intentionally left open as a creative endeavor to allow students the freedom and autonomy to express and pursue their own developmental needs. Ideas and suggestions are shared (such as poetry, videos, artforms, presentations, establishing integration discussion groups, etc.) to provide direction, but students are encouraged to think freely, with the caveat that their work and its meaning must be easily interpretable to their peers and the educator. A carefully designed rubric is necessary to help students understand what is required and we delineate the following expectations: 1) evidence of the conversation with an educator (signed letter, photograph, etc.), 2) synthesis of experiential learning and scholarship are demonstrated, 3) understanding of the demeanor and person of an integrated professor is evidenced, and 4) the creative medium achieves a clear communication of key concepts. This CA can be challenging at first given the broad scope, but in a context of supportive faculty mentoring it can achieve the following: 1) students experience becoming co-laborers in the field of integration, 2) students may establish a mentoring relationship (and at least have an experience of it), 3) students are required to think critically and contextually express integration through the end product, and 4) students consider how they will behave and relate personally in their future calling.

Conclusion

When Christ has meaningfully informed our convictions, integration is no longer something we pick up or put down. Rather, it is contextual, and lived expressions vary depending on a variety of factors. The context returns an influence on our convictions, making our daily exposure to influences vital. Beyond the mass of past and present influences, Christian counselor educators engage six important factors that may inform their convictions and the convictions of their students: worldview, spiritual formation, relationships, counseling theory, learning theory, and educational context. A key task before the educator is to harness these six factors and utilize them in a God glorifying manner to shape and nurture the development of students' convictions. We have

presented a considered set of pedagogical tools to support Christian educators in achieving this task. There are many limiting factors within education, such as time, resources, energy, motivation, class requirements, governing structures, and more. Nonetheless, we hope that educators will consider, adapt, and evolve our proposition to fit their own contexts and join us in the pursuit of taking integration from a confusing discussion or problem and prepare the way for it to be life-giving expression.

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