Focus on Telepractice and E-Learning
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(cover photo courtesy of Duane Whisenhunt)
Message from the Editor
Dr. Julia Whisenhunt, Gamma Zeta Chapter

In this edition of the *CSI Exemplar*, we highlight practical information related to telemental health (TMH) and e-learning. The editorial team chose the theme for this edition before the start of the pandemic. Little did we know that the landscape of counselor education would change drastically and abruptly before the release of this edition. Although these swift changes to our field have surely been the source of anxiety and frustration in some ways, we believe the articles in this edition highlight the resilience, creativity, and professionalism of our fellow colleagues. In the following pages, we hope all members of CSI will find practical and helpful information related to learning and practicing in this new era.

We begin this edition with an update from the CSI Task Force for Hybrid and Online Programs, which has been working diligently to provide resources and guidance for CSI chapters housed within hybrid and fully online programs. Next, we present information from the Alpha Omega Lambda Chapter regarding their efforts to increase chapter engagement for their online students. Shifting to a practitioner focus, Dr. Caroline Perjessy summarizes best practices for tele-supervision, after which Dr. Anita Neuer Colburn discusses strategies for enhancing the therapeutic alliance when practicing TMH. We then hear from Dr. Daphne Washington regarding tips for thriving in online classes, and then Elisa Pellegrino Kohutis and Dr. Anita M. Pool tell us about their success creating “Zoomster parties” for local children during the pandemic. Next, Dr. Michelle Wade shifts our focus towards ethical conduct when using social media in counseling practice, and Dr. Nicole Stargell addresses legal and ethical considerations when using TMH. Finally, we shift to a focus on counselor education. Dr. Angie Smith and Erik Messinger present strategies for taking a trauma-informed approach to teaching in an online classroom, and Dr. Michelle Hunnicutt Hollenbaugh and I wrap up the content with an article that addresses the application of Scholarship of Teaching and Learning to counselor education. As with each edition of the *CSI Exemplar*, we work diligently to include voices from all segments of our membership. We hope that all CSI members reading this edition will be able to take something of value from the edition and apply it to their work.

On a personal note, these past eight months have been challenging in ways most of us could never have predicted. Our country and our fellow members have experienced compounded sadness, fear, pain, and loss. Words cannot sufficiently describe the events of these past several months, and words certainly cannot heal those wounds. Nonetheless, the editorial team and I wish to express our gratitude to the CSI membership who reflect the best and brightest in our field, and we want for you all to know that we value and appreciate each of you–our amazing colleagues. Together, we help to make this world a better place.
Headquarters Updates
Dr. Holly J. Hartwig Moorhead, CSI Chief Executive Officer
Upsilon Nu Chi Chapter

In the midst of an unprecedented, challenging year, 500+ dedicated Chapter Faculty Advisors have led their chapter members in thoughtfully responding to needs within their communities and creatively adapting to changes necessitated by the ongoing pandemic. Hundreds of other leaders serving on CSI’s Executive Council, committees, task forces, and review panels also have been strategically planning for the future to ensure that CSI’s mission, to promote excellence in counseling, continues to advance though the Society’s programs and supportive member and chapter funding.

Many chapters have begun their 2020-21 activities this fall by submitting their chapter Fall Annual Plans outlining how they will serve their members and communities in the coming months. You can see what hundreds of CSI chapters are planning, and perhaps get some ideas for your chapter, by accessing all of the Fall Annual Plans submitted this year on www.csi-net.org. While there, take a look at the Spring Annual Reports submitted by chapters every year as well to see the breadth and depth of how CSI members are serving through their chapters.

As more chapter and CSI International events are facilitated online, stay up-to-date about upcoming program deadlines and CSI events by visiting www.csi-net.org and noting the information in the Deadline & Event Quick Links section at the top of the page. Find information about CSI’s Webinar Series available online, including upcoming leadership trainings. Although CSI is not able to provide in-person leadership training as usual during fall ACES regional conferences, free, online training for Chapter Faculty Advisors and chapter leaders remains available on the CSI website and via live and recorded webinars.
CSI Chapter Faculty Advisor Question and Answer Session
Dr. Raul Machuca, Dr. Maya Georgieva, & Dr. Claudette Brown-Smythe
Thursday, October 22, 2020
2:00-3:00 PM EDT

CSI Chapter Leaders Training
Dr. James W. McMullen, Dr. Allison K. Arnekrans, Annaleise Fisher, & Rebecca A. Edelman
Monday, November 16, 2020
1:00-2:00 PM EST

Additionally, especially designed for both new and veteran CFAs, CSI’s Chapter Faculty Advisor Committee has developed an Orientation for New Chapter Faculty Advisors. These brief training modules explain CSI’s policies, online Member Management System, ways to earn chapter rebates, management of chapter profiles, and valuable online resources for chapter leadership. The Robert’s Rules of Order module is a valuable resource to help train chapter leaders on practical steps for facilitating chapter meetings.

Every fall, thousands of new members take the CSI Oath of Membership within chapter initiations hosted by hundreds of CSI chapters (Check out CSI’s resources for online chapter initiations!). We are delighted that new members will become part of CSI this year through eight newly chartered chapters:

- Rho Eta Nu Alpha Rho - Liberty University - North Area Region Online
- Rho Eta Nu Gamma - Liberty University - North Central Region Online
- Rho Eta Pi Rho - Liberty University - Western Region Online
- Rho Eta Rho Mu - Liberty University - Rocky Mountain Region Online
- Rho Eta Sigma - Liberty University - Southwest Region Online
- Rho Eta Sigma Epsilon - Liberty University - Southeast Region Online
- Tau Upsilon Alpha - Troy University-Augusta
- Lambda Sigma Mu - Florida State University

We look forward to seeing the contributions that will be made to the Society and the counseling profession by members from both these new chapters as well as three newly reactivated chapters:

- Alpha Sigma Rho - Albany State University
- Phi Delta - Fairleigh Dickinson University
- Omega Sigma Chi - Oklahoma State University
All members, new and renewing, will be able to access updated, easy-to-use CSI Member Profiles at www.csi-net.org. Over the summer, CSI had to transition to a new database and update related functionalities on the CSI website. Now it is easier than ever to quickly make updates to contact information, passwords, and other details within your member profile, as well as access all of your completed CE certificates in one place. To access your member profile, simply:

1. Visit www.csi-net.org
2. Click “Sign In” in the top right corner.
3. Select “CSI Member Login.”
4. Sign into your profile using the email address associated with your CSI member profile as your username. If you’ve not signed into the new system before, just click “Forgot your Password?” at the bottom of the page to reset your password and login.
5. If you need to renew your membership, you’ll be prompted to do so once logged into your profile. If your membership is current (or after membership renewal), you’ll be directed to your profile page.

Thank you for your contributions to CSI. Please stay connected with CSI (www.csi-net.org, Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter) and share with us the good things your chapter is doing this fall. We look forward to celebrating the meaningful work that continues to be done by CSI members in CSI chapters!
Chapter Resources: Update from the Task Force for Hybrid and Online Programs
Dr. Anita A. Neuer Colburn
Nu Upsilon Chapter

The Chi Sigma Iota International Task Force for Hybrid and Online Programs was initiated in Fall of 2019 with a goal of better understanding the needs of chapters housed in online and hybrid programs and to recommend to the CSI International Executive Committee best strategies to support those chapters. Little did we know that a pandemic was right around the corner!

Since its inception, the Task Force sent out a survey to Chapter Faculty Advisors for their input, and we also hosted two separate focus group meetings to discuss what CFAs were doing, where they were succeeding/having challenges, and how CSI could best support their chapters. We shared our findings with the Executive Council and made recommendations accordingly. We collaborated with the Chapter Development Committee to present a webinar promoting leadership and engagement in online/hybrid chapters. Finally, we developed a “Best Practices” list for online initiations.

Currently, we are collaborating with the CSI International CFA Committee to create a “Best Practices” document specifically for CFAs in online and hybrid programs. We are also assisting them with developing a PowerPoint template for online initiations. We are continuing to reach out to chapters who had to pivot unexpectedly to online initiations to further refine the list of best practices.

The members of the task force include Ami Crowley (Theta Chi Sigma), Nicole DiLella (Rho Eta), and Margaret Lamar (Pi Alpha Upsilon). Do you have ideas you’d like to share? Please contact me at anita.nc@icloud.com.
Chapter Happenings: Increasing Participation in an Online Chapter Setting

Chase C. McKinney and Dr. Helen Runyan,
Alpha Omega Lambda Chapter

Alpha Omega Lambda (AOL) is a chapter based in Virginia Beach, Virginia with a predominantly online membership at Regent University. Although membership has remained high over the years, participation had recently begun to decline, especially among online members. Program participation is a desirable goal for many, if not all, organizations. During the 2018-19 academic year, it became apparent that changes were needed for the chapter to thrive once again. The chapter leadership of the 2019-20 school year developed a multi-year plan to prepare, implement, and review events for both in-person and online students, including incorporating alumni, developing social events, and also a first-of-its-kind online initiation banquet. The plans that were developed were met with degrees of success and wisdom gained for how to make something meaningful amid a global pandemic.

The 2019-20 school year served as a restart for the chapter, and event planning and execution were crucial. The leadership team focused on a balance between social engagement and professional development during the fall and spring semesters. This was accomplished through platforms such as Zoom and BlackBoard Collaborate. We utilized the leadership team, along with program representatives, to take a more active role in marketing the events. However, another challenge arose as our initiation process was disrupted by the novel coronavirus, COVID-19.

We had been planning a first-of-its-kind initiation banquet and award ceremony for our chapter to take place a few days before commencement exercises; however, with the university moving to remote graduation, the AOL chapter needed to make a change as well. Instead of meeting at a restaurant in Norfolk, Virginia, we instead hosted our initiation via Zoom with a meaningful keynote address and an opportunity for each inductee to be featured one at a time as their name was called. Our chapter learned that despite adverse situations being present, resilience was ever-present. Sameroff and Rosenblum (2006) stated, “…resilience is defined as response to challenge” (p. 118). This simple statement defines the work that we had set out to do. Approximately 15 of our inductees attended the 2019 ceremony, while our 2020 initiation had more than double with almost 40 in attendance. What made a difference was vision-casting by the chapter president, follow-through with the leadership team,
and support of the chapter faculty advisor.

Following that success, the current leadership has developed a large calendar of events, delegating leadership for each event. This has allowed for further leadership development for various team members. In developing events and programs, a successful legacy has been set forth ensuring its duplicability for not only the chapter, but also the students it serves in areas of scholarship, leadership, and service. Further, we have been able to expand and create new committees for more engagement with our members and adding more leadership opportunities. Without vision, people (and organizations) can go astray, but when focus is maintained in the face of challenge, success is possible. It is this vision, which started in 2019, that has propelled us in 2020 and will continue in 2021 with the next leadership team.

Chase McKinney, MA, LPC, NCC

Dr. Helen Runyan, LPC, NCC
Counselors’ Corner:
Best Practices in Tele-Supervision
Dr. Caroline Perjessy,
Kappa Sigma Upsilon Chapter

As the field of clinical mental health counseling has evolved, so has the nature and distribution of clinical supervision. Technology assisted supervision and training (TAST; Rousmaniere et al., 2014), an important outcome of the supervision evolution, compels supervisors to consider delivery of supervision that is ethical, legal, and aligns with regulatory processes. Over the past few decades, research in the area of TAST (e.g., Goodyear & Rousmaniere, 2019; Reese et al., 2009) illuminates the benefits and considerations of conducting supervision in this manner, promoting increased use. Further, due to COVID-19, tele-supervision has received increased attention as the profession’s reliance on technology in conducting counseling and supervision has escalated. The purpose of this article is to describe current research on tele-supervision, along with an understanding of what might constitute best practices of tele-supervision, considering ethical and legal implications.

Research on the effectiveness of tele-supervision appears to be increasing, which was, perhaps, in response to Barrio Minton’s (2019) analysis of CES literature in 2017 which found that only 4% of CES literature focused on technology in CES. As such, recent literature indicates positive results for the utilization of tele-supervision. Tarlow’s (2020) study on supervision, conducted prior to COVID-19, compared tele-supervision with in-person supervision using supervisory alliance and satisfaction with supervision as criteria for analysis. Using a multiple baseline single-case experimental design, results indicated that participants experienced minor, if any, differences between tele-supervision and in-person supervision. Jordan and Shearer’s 2019 analysis of six studies focusing on supervision, five of which were “exploratory” in nature, found similar results. The authors found no significant differences in satisfaction with the supervisory working alliance, supervision process, or perceived effectiveness or self-efficacy (Jordan & Shearer, 2019). However, some qualitative data revealed that for some supervisees with unique learning and developmental needs, tele-supervision may be less than ideal (Glosoff et al., 2016). Moreover, research has discovered that tele-supervision provides greater access to qualified supervisors (Inman et al., 2019); has been found to be a cost effective option for supervisees in isolated, rural, international, and underserved communities (Inman et al., 2009); and has been found effective for both individual and group supervision (e.g., Reese et al., 2009). Thus, some of the most recent literature on tele-supervision indicates
that its effectiveness, conceptualized in multiple ways, is analogous to in-person supervision.

However, there are considerations and risks to using tele-supervision, many of which relate to ethical, regulatory, and legal practices. Further, evaluation of technology competence is challenging due to the evolving nature of technology. As such, supervisors and supervisees engaging in tele-supervision must demonstrate competence in the use of technology (ACA, 2014; ACES Supervision Best Practice Guidelines, 2011), especially since tele-supervision can cause heightened anxiety in some (e.g., Sorlie et al., 1999). Researchers have identified other challenges when using tele-supervision, which include supervisors and supervisees experiencing difficulty in understanding nonverbal communication due to electronic means (e.g., Vaccaro & Lambie, 2007); supervisors lacking knowledge related to supervisees’ local laws and regulations, rendering them unhelpful when faced with legal questions or concerns (e.g., Abbass et al., 2011); and cultural misunderstandings increasing between supervisor and supervisee (e.g., Powell & Migdole, 2012).

Researchers who have developed best practices for tele-supervision consider ethical, legal, and regulatory aspects of this work (e.g., Martin et al., 2017; Rousmaniere & Renfro-Michel, 2016). Guidelines for best practice in tele-supervision are numerous and encompass an integration of several sources, including the ACA Code of Ethics (2014), Best Practices in Clinical Supervision (ACES, 2011), and work by Rousmaniere and Renfro-Michel (2016).

**Ethical and Technological Considerations of Tele-Supervision**

A comprehensive discussion of technological considerations related to client confidentiality is beyond the scope of this article; however, it is a necessary consideration given the reliance on technological competence in delivering effective and ethical supervision, thus, they are discussed concurrently. Supervisors may be unclear on what constitutes ethical technological competence, given the shifting landscape of technological innovation and how best to meet the competencies required (Rousmaniere et al., 2014). However, the ACA Code of Ethics (2014) sections F.2.c. and H.1.a. both address online supervision and the requirements of supervisors engaging in tele-supervision to be competent, knowledgeable, and skillful in this area of supervision. Perhaps most importantly, issues related to client confidentiality are the most significant.

Supervisors and supervisees must comply with site policies, state and federal laws (e.g., HIPAA, FERPA), professional codes of ethics, and best practices associated with data management and security. Complying with federal regulations (e.g., HIPAA, FERPA) to ensure client confidentiality along with obtaining training in a HIPAA-compliant platform; using encryption software to protect confidential data, password managers, virtual private networks (VPN); and two-factor authentication to reduce risk of violating confidentiality is essential in conducting tele-supervision (Glossoff et al., 2016). Additionally, supervisees should avoid
using email, chat, or text messages to exchange Protected Health Information (PHI) unless it is through a secure, password-protected program. Client sessions must be listened to in a quiet, private location with headphones. Finally, supervisors must discuss any use of technology with the supervisee and clients in writing and verbally throughout the process of supervision and especially during the informed consent conversation.

The Approved Clinical Supervisor Code of Ethics (Approved Clinical Supervisor, CCE, 2016) delineates additional guidelines related to tele-supervision, which include, amongst other things: (a) developing written procedures regarding the use of electronic communication when offering supervision services; (b) informing supervisees, in writing, of materials needed, limits of confidentiality, benefits and risks of technology, possible technological failures and alternative options in case of technological failures, and measures used to minimize risk of violating confidentiality. Supervisors can address these considerations in the Supervisory Informed Consent, which also outlines assessment of supervisees. Supervisee assessment practice using tele-supervision is similar in nature to traditional supervision assessment whereby supervisors identify multiple data points to ascertain supervisee competence, use video tagging features, listen to audio recordings of sessions, and more minimally, invite supervisee self-report (Glosoff et al., 2016).

**Best Practice Guidelines for Tele-Supervision**

Martin et al. (2017) and Rousemanier and Renfro-Michel’s (2016) suggestions for best practices in tele-supervision offer supervisors guidance on priorities to consider using this format. One of the most crucial considerations is that the supervisory relationship be maintained, which provides opportunities to individualize tele-supervision. Supervisors can individualize supervision based upon the supervisee’s developmental needs, such as the need for additional technology training. Focusing on the supervisee as an individual will assist the supervisory alliance in determining expectations and goals for supervision, which might also necessitate the integration of in-person supervision as needed. Determining the goals for supervision will be partially dictated by the type of technology used.

Martin et al. (2017) and Rousemanier and Renfro-Michel’s (2016) suggestions for best practices also address the need for supervisors to address communication and ways to minimize distractions, the use of silence, and avoiding multitasking while engaging in supervision. As mentioned previously, developing and communicating a plan to counteract technical problems, a necessary component of the supervisory informed consent statement, is essential. Further, supervisors want to factor in additional supervision time to mitigate technological issues.

Efforts to maintain the supervisory relationship reflect multicultural and social justice considerations. Paying attention to communication, the use of silence, and how tone and language can be used and misconstrued are important considerations when using tele-
supervision. To counter the limitations of tele-supervision, which include the difficulty in monitoring supervisee body language, supervisors can suggest increased dialogue to address potential discrepancies immediately, model multicultural competence, and increase observation and scrutiny of tone and facial expressions (Ancis & Marshall, 2010). Professional boundary setting can be a part of culturally-bound supervision conversations and with the technological component, provide further opportunity to dialogue transparently.

Supervisors can engage in conversations reflecting expectations of how and when they will be available to supervisees due to the ease of accessibility in using technology for supervision; for example, can the supervisee text the supervisor in the evening or on the weekend? Supervisors, when using tele-supervision, need to reconsider continuity in supervision so that they are available to supervisees in between supervision sessions. Conversations such as these also encourage conversations related to professional boundary setting, which supervisees need modeled for them. The utilization of technology can also, unfortunately, create a digital divide amongst supervisees who have challenges accessing the internet, have outdated or older computers, and struggle with accessing other resources needed for tele-supervision (e.g., headsets, cameras). A supervisor’s awareness of these social justice areas is crucial in developing a strong supervisory alliance, along with maintaining ethical standards related to technological competence of clinicians. For some supervisees and supervisors, the reliance on videoconference technology can cause anxiety (e.g., Sorlie et al., 1999), suggesting the need for problem solving and adequate training in the use of technology.

In summary, there has been significant development and research related to conducting tele-supervision in the counseling profession. The ethical, legal, and regulatory aspects of using technology in supervision, along with its impact on the supervisory relationship requires careful attention. Continued research in these areas, including multicultural considerations of tele-supervision, would be of benefit to the profession.

Dr. Caroline Perjessy, LMHC (FL), LPC (GA), Qualified Supervisor (FL)
Seeking publication? Explore the CSI outlets.
Counselors’ Corner: Strengthening Therapeutic Alliance from a Distance
Dr. Anita Neuer Colburn, Nu Upsilon Chapter

The importance of therapeutic alliance in client outcomes has been well-documented in professional counseling literature. But when the COVID-19 pandemic hit, counselors around the country and around the world had to quickly pivot from meeting clients in cozy, intentionally designed offices to working on camera from kitchen tables, bedroom dressers, and make-shift spaces, all while keeping their families out of the background. In addition to understanding laws (HIPAA) and ethics (ACA, 2014; AMHCA, 2015; and NBCC, 2011) related to the provision of telemental health (TMH) services, professional counselors have been challenged to normalize and nurture therapeutic relationships in this modality, while minimizing both predictable and unpredictable distractions.

In my work as a remote clinical supervisor, distance counselor, and distance-based counselor educator, I have learned about and experienced many strategies that seem to either help or hinder therapeutic connections over videoconferencing modalities. In this article, I will outline what I believe are best practices for bolstering and protecting the client-counselor working alliance. To be clear, there are many laws and ethical codes that counselors who provide TMH must be aware of in order to function ethically, professionally, and legally. Additionally, there are a variety of distanced-based counseling strategies. In this article, I will focus specifically on that ever-important relationship between counselor and client when counseling via videoconferencing platforms, such as Zoom, Doxy.me, Vsee, and others.

Some counselors have returned to their offices and are providing face-to-face services with certain provisions in place, such as using a bigger room for counseling to allow for social distancing or using masks/face shields. These provisions are obviously designed to keep everyone safe but may feel quite odd to both counselors and clients who may be accustomed to a more intimate setting for counseling sessions. Some counselors are going to their offices and providing TMH from there. This introduces a new potential power dynamic into the counseling relationship as the counselor now sees the client in their own home, yet the client is still seeing the counselor in their office. Many counselors are performing TMH from their own homes, which may complicate things even further, as both client and counselor search for ways to protect their privacy and have uninterrupted time together.

Set Up Your Space

Just as counselors are intentional about the way they set up their offices, considering the type and placement of furniture, colors,
and lighting, they should be cognizant of creating the same kind of warmth via the camera. If you have a computer and use a counseling platform that will support virtual backgrounds, choose a photo background that is either a picture of your actual counseling office or a stock photograph of a counseling office that appeals to your taste. If your client has a computer that supports virtual backgrounds, you can share the photo with them so that you both have the same background, even though you are in two completely different locations. This increases the experience of being in the same room, enhancing the connection between you and your client. Many counselors and clients do not have computers that support virtual backgrounds. In these cases, as you are able, be intentional about the positioning of your computer and the background behind you. Consider what you are disclosing to your client about yourself by what the camera “sees” behind you. These decisions should be made intentionally based on your own therapeutic style. Some counselors will prefer a blank wall behind them for minimal self-disclosure while others will carefully ‘stage’ a background with family photos, books, or particular artwork. To the degree that you are able, conduct your TMH sessions from a private space in your home. Keep in mind that when you meet with your client, you will also see them in their homes, giving you access to different information than you had when you meet with clients in your office. This information can be used to help strengthen your relationship. Using observation, open-ended questions and empathic responding, you can bring in an element of the client’s life that you previously did not have access to. At the same time, be mindful of client responses as not all clients will want to talk about their homes or what is going on in their homes while they are in a session with you.

When choosing your wardrobe, select solid colors, avoiding all black or all white. The camera seems to “like” jewel tones and earth tones the best. The more patterns and colors in your background, the more you should stick with just one color to minimize visual distractions. Even though you are working from home, dress professionally, in a similar manner to what you would wear if going to the office to meet your clients. Wear something with a collar or add a scarf or tie to look professional and avoid dressing too formally. If you can, sit at a desk or living room-style chair, rather than on a couch (and definitely not a bed!). The most important thing you can do to maximize therapeutic alliance over a video conferencing connection is to bring your whole, present self into the session. To this end, build in plenty of margin before and after client sessions so that you have your own time to debrief and process, tend to whatever might be going on in your house, attend to personal needs, and have time to mentally and emotionally prepare for the next client.

**Interacting on Camera**

Counselors learn of the importance of eye contact and other nonverbal forms of
communication early in their training. This is one of the biggest challenges when providing TMH services. First, be sure that the lighting in your counseling area is appropriate. You should have light in front of you, rather than behind you, so that your client can easily see your face. It also helps to coach your client to follow suit, so that you can easily see their facial expressions. If you have a light behind you and not in front of you, or if you have a window behind you on a sunny day, you will appear to your client as a dark shadow. Position your camera so that you are looking straight ahead when looking directly into the camera. The client will experience receiving eye contact from you when you are looking into the camera rather than looking at the client’s video feed. It is a challenge to learn to provide a client with this important basic attending skill since doing so actually requires you to not look at the client – a bit of an oxymoron! To make this easier, drag and place the client’s video feed so it is as close to your camera as possible – directly underneath your camera is best. This will allow you to still be tuned into their facial cues while also providing them with eye contact. Wherever possible, minimize or disable your view of your own video feed. This removes the temptation to look at yourself instead of either the client or the camera.

Use a high-quality headset for best audio. Encourage your clients to do the same. In addition to improving the quality of the audio for both of you, the use of headsets helps protect privacy on both ends of the session. Ensure that all other notifications on your computer or phone are disabled while you are in session. You do not want your own attention, or your client’s attention, to be drawn to an incoming email or text sound while you are in session. If there are unavoidable sounds around you that you think your client might hear, mute yourself when you are not talking, and briefly explain to your client what is happening while keeping the focus of the session on the client rather than on what is happening in your location. Try to schedule your client meetings for when you are not expecting deliveries, which come with doorbells and other audio distractions. To the degree possible, schedule your sessions for when you are able to minimize other distractions in your home.

Because TMH counseling delivery typically only gives us access to the client’s head and upper body, we are missing out on some important nonverbal body language cues, like shifting in the seat, or tapping the hand or foot. For this reason, counselors should generally slow the pace of the work, and make room for frequent immediacy check-ins. Keep your client in the present moment by asking questions such as, “how are you feeling about our discussion right now?” or “how is this going for you?” or “what’s coming up for you as we’re talking about this?” These questions are not new but are more necessary in the absence of being in the same room. The longer you have been in a counseling relationship with your client and the more familiar you are, the less frequently you may need to perform.
these check-ins. More frequent check-ins are beneficial when building relationships with new clients and will help give you access to information otherwise provided by client body language in face-to-face sessions.

**Prepare your Client**

In addition to preparing yourself, your counselor-client relationship will benefit to the degree that you help your client prepare to participate in counseling via TMH. The ethical requirement of reviewing technology protocols and legal requirement of discussing emergency procedures give you additional opportunities to engage in relationship-building. Be sure that your informed consent process includes steps to take when technology fails (for example, a cell phone back-up) and a discussion about professional boundaries and limits to confidentiality.

Regardless of the modality or platform chosen for the delivery of TMH, counselors should do everything possible to maximize therapeutic alliance with the goal of best outcomes for clients, and must also follow appropriate legal and ethical mandates. Before embarking on providing TMH services, you should consult applicable federal and state laws in addition to ethical codes. Counselors new to TMH should engage in formal training and either engage a colleague who has TMH experience and can provide consultation, or engage a clinical supervisor with TMH experience. The most important tip is to be intentional about what you are doing, rather than “simply” meeting a client on videoconferencing instead of at the office.

Dr. Anita A. Neuer Colburn, LPC (VA), LCMHCS (NC), BC-TMH, ACS, NCC
Student Success:
Tips to Thrive as an Online Learner
Dr. Daphne L. Blick Washington, Lambda Chapter

**Although online counselor education is by no means a new phenomenon, our awareness of the need for both counselors-in-training (CITs) as well as seasoned counselors to have confidence and competence learning through this modality has been heightened in the wake of the global pandemic.**

At a moment’s notice, CITs who were accustomed to completing their coursework in brick-and-mortar settings were thrust into virtual classrooms in order to finish out their spring semesters. With social distancing guidelines and quarantining requirements continuing to be enforced throughout the summer and into the fall terms, more institutions are recognizing the need to have multiple course delivery options in order to support their abilities to pivot and continue providing quality educational experiences.

Not only are counselor education programs experiencing this shift, but some professional counselors and counselor educators who have grown accustomed to face-to-face conferences found themselves now engaged for the first time in virtual conferences and breakout rooms. There is also an increased need for online learning experiences to fulfill continuing education requirements for certification and licensure renewal. While the shift may have been somewhat intimidating for those previously unaccustomed to online learning, what has become more evident is the potential for these modalities to reach and engage more learners. In turn, this increases the capacity to train and develop more professionals who can ethically meet the counseling needs that are continuing to increase within our global community. So, regardless of where one is now on the continuum of comfort with online learning, CITs and counselors both young and old will greatly benefit from further developing competencies in this area.

I taught my first online class as a counselor educator in 2008; and I have experienced distance learning both as a student as well as an instructor. What has continued to captivate me with this approach to learning has been both the flexibility with which one can potentially engage in studies, coupled with the capacity to teach and learn with individuals across the world. However, to most successfully maximize this style of learning with any longevity, one is encouraged to have the necessary technology, technological skills, environmental surroundings,
Distance learning has come a long way from the cassette tape lectures and mail-in assignment submissions that I remember experiencing many years ago. Now, students can watch or listen to their lectures on their computers, phones, or tablets and can upload their assignments into their online classrooms. Instead of physically showing up in a classroom setting with their professors and peers to attend live intensives, students are also able to learn together in synchronous virtual classrooms. However, if you do not have the proper equipment to effectively access the learning management systems being utilized, or the proper software applications and internet speed to join in video conference calls, you can easily experience frustration that will paint a distorted picture of what online learning can be. You must determine and obtain the hardware that you will need to be successful, which includes: a computer with proper specifications, monitors and screens (noting what screen sizes you need to engage in your work comfortably), microphone, headphones, camera, mouse or trackpad, power cord, printer, scanner, phone, and any other accessories that are required. Additionally, you want to ensure that you have the highest internet speed necessary to minimize lag time when participants are sharing with one another or you are attempting to upload assignments. You also may want to consider having access to back-up hardware in the event that you experience technology malfunctions that would impact your ability to maintain engagement in live class experiences or submit assignments on time. Your technology needs to have ample memory both to load and execute any software packages and applications required, as well as to store all of your assignments and paperwork.

**Taking Action**

Once you have the “vehicle” to arrive at your online destination, next you need to develop your ability of actually driving the car. This will require you taking some time to learn how to utilize all of the software applications that will support your learning experiences. You may need to take some time to watch tutorials on how to effectively navigate your learning management system (LMS), how to access electronic books, how to navigate online portfolio tools to save major assessments and document clinical hours, or how to communicate and present in video conference calls. You may also realize that as an online learner, you need to reach out to a person who can walk you through the tutorial process, whether it be virtually or with them physically sitting with you. Take time to find out what learning providers offer for support by phone, live chat, video calls, and in person that will support your competence using all of the necessary applications.

Along with getting up to speed on how to navigate your technology, also be mindful of whether or not your environment is conducive to your online learning. This includes the actual setting that you are working in, for example, your office, outside
in nature, a library, café, or your home, as well as the chair that you are using and your actual workspace. Think about the ergonomics of your workspace so that it can be tailored to meet your individual needs. Organized workspaces that are free from external distractions and comfortable to engage for the period of time you will be learning will support your ability to focus and persist with the tasks that you are required to complete. Additionally, find ways to decorate or accentuate your spaces such that they encourage your learning and are uplifting to your senses. This can include anything from a mousepad that has a printed inspirational picture or message, to a candle burning, to a counseling book from your favorite author. Take the time to identify what spaces work for you and what motivates you; and be intentional about crafting your environment to support your success.

Many students who have engaged in both online learning and more traditional face-to-face classes have suggested that the online classes carry a higher workload, including more reading and writing, in order to demonstrate learning and proficiency. Although this will in fact vary from class to class, it does remind one to recognize that there will be a significant time commitment required to successfully complete online learning work. Online learning can be very appealing to students who are juggling multiple life responsibilities, but one cannot make the mistake of presuming that flexibility and virtual experiences will equate to lower demands. Obtaining guidance from instructors at the outset with regard to the minimum number of hours recommended to allot for each class per week, and intentionally blocking that time in your schedule, will encourage setting priorities and allowing ample time for online studies.

Depending upon how you learn best and the time it takes you as an individual to complete your work, you may find it helpful to set aside additional time as well as enlist other learning supports. To be a successful online learner requires that you become more mindful of your learning style and proactive in meeting your learning needs. Maximizing what is available through the institution to support your learning, coupled with also identifying and utilizing external resources that will meet your individual needs, will bolster your success.

Some individuals may need to implement an additional form of structure and accountability that mimics what the physical classroom represented. They may choose to set particular times that they commit to logging in and working on their studies that work well with their schedules. Some students benefit from regularly contacting their professors in order to feel greater personal connectedness. Others find it helpful to reach out to their classmates and develop study groups with online peers, whether they meet in person or virtually. With the depth and breadth of material that you can now access through the internet, some may choose to watch additional presentations or read materials found online.
related to the topics that are being discussed in class in order to enrich and solidify their understanding. Depending upon your place of employment and connectedness to others within the counseling profession, you may also find counselors and other students outside of your formal degree program who would enjoy hearing about and discussing what you are studying. Online learning can be especially fruitful if you have developed a way to utilize what you are studying virtually and practically implement or share that learning in your day-to-day life.

As counselors, it is important that we are intentional in our online learning practices such that we integrate it into our lives in a manner that allows us to also model excellent self-care. Online learning has the potential to significantly increase the amount of screen-time one experiences. One may find it beneficial to add up the amount of screen time one engages in each week through online learning, work, entertainment and social media, and make adjustments that will support both eye care and overall wellness. Engaging in regular check-ups to examine your eye health, and developing practices that allow your eyes to rest and renew at various times throughout the day become more important, and is something for us to be mindful of as we experience more screen time not only through online learning but also through increased tele-health counseling practices.

**Conclusion**

Although we have seen an uptick in online learning in counselor education as a result of the pandemic, we may find this has become an entrance-way to further validating the usefulness and effectiveness that online learning can have both for CITs and for counselors and counselor educators in their life-long professional development endeavors. There are some forms of learning that are required to be provided within physical proximity of one another, but the potential that is present to support increased counselor competencies and counselor access through on-line learning is great. Therefore, we are charged to become proficient in how to utilize these technologies in a way that not only promotes learning but wellness; and we are also fortunate that significant ground has already been broken to support us in our success.

Dr. Daphne L. Blick Washington, LCPC, NCC, ACS, BC-TMH
Student success is often the culmination of perseverance, hard work, and determination on the part of the student, along with commitment, availability, and support on the part of the professor. This symbiotic relationship between students and their professors becomes especially true during synchronous e-learning. The virtual classroom can provide ample opportunities for connection and support, thereby facilitating overarching professional and personal growth for students. Designated weekly time with a consistent professor throughout the assigned course offers that unwavering touchstone necessary to keep engaged students on track while maximizing their learning and development potential. Mutual respect and authentic communication are the underpinnings of a shared mission of knowledge expansion and commitment to the counseling profession between students and professors (Cicco, 2014). Gratefully, this has been my experience in the clinical mental health counseling and the addiction counseling master’s programs at the University of the Cumberlands.

The incredible flexibility and affordability provided by a virtual platform initially drew me to an online learning environment. Equally enticing was the ability to have all the material and information necessary for success at my fingertips while I essentially moved through these items at my own comfortable pace. Having the ability to relisten to recorded lectures and connect with classmates for collaboration at any time via email or social media were additional bonuses. I assumed there would be a trade-off for these benefits, and I was sure it would come in the form of the disconnect I would invariably feel trying to engage with a professor virtually. Thankfully, this proved not to be my experience. While there are the occasional professors who operate solely within the confines of their scheduled class time, most professors regularly log on early, remain after class to answer questions, and are available for scheduled appointments to discuss private concerns. For many professors, starting class early, staying a few minutes after ending, and availing themselves of student inquiries are just the beginning of ways they continually create an atmosphere of generosity, authenticity, transparency, and support. Through the guidance and mentorship offered by these incredible professors, my learning transcended the parameters of textbook readings, Blackboard assignments, journal articles, and associated links. I learned who...
my professors are as people, professionals, and counselors. In turn, I had the opportunity to show my true self, a dedicated graduate student gleefully navigating her return to school after 25 years, committed to skillfully juggling motherhood and coursework, sometimes with excellence and invariably with a generous sprinkling of self-deprecating humor! This copious synergy between professor and student afforded me the courage and confidence to step out of my comfort zone, think way outside my box, and put my ideas into action by proudly creating my own virtual Zoom group for children and their intergenerational communities.

Earlier this year, as the COVID-19 Pandemic began to spread and take hold, soul-wrenching emotions of sadness, heaviness, and gloom were palpable across my community and our country. Many individuals were left feeling alone while enveloped by the sorrow of losing the innocence of how we once moved through our day, and worse, losing people we loved to this infectious disease. While many adults found the reduction in human connection required by the stay-at-home orders of the COVID-19 Pandemic extremely difficult to tolerate, many children found themselves amid even greater isolation making their predicament much worse. Research has shown that social isolation is linked to many health concerns and social connection is a protective factor among adolescents of middle school age (London & Ingram, 2018).

Modified social distancing orders for children quickly turned into immediate school closures and elimination of all social gatherings, leaving middle school children void of interpersonal connection and desired social interaction beyond their nuclear families. Once enriching their lives through engagement, friendship, and fun, many group activities seemingly vanished overnight. School bus rides, lunch table chats, warm glances and high-fives from kind teachers, after-school activities, and weekend sports ceased with no warning and no preparation for the transition. My three young children and their peers expressed this abrupt changeover
only amplified their existing worries about a changing world, influenced by their observations of television programs, social and news media stories, and conversations heard within the home. As a mother, these sentiments were difficult to hear and even harder to process. As an individual trying to make meaning of this suffering, I felt compelled to use my voice and make a difference. As a professional counseling student, I wanted to embody the advocacy standard shared through the American Counseling Association Code of Ethics (American Counseling Association [ACA], 2014) and my professors at the University of the Cumberlands, to somehow ignite change around this isolating experience.

I saw a need to organize a safe, nurturing, supportive, positive, and upbeat space for children and their intergenerational communities to facilitate connection and bonding during the shelter-in-place orders of the COVID-19 Pandemic. I decided to create a no-cost virtual program geared at reducing isolation, facilitating bonding, and increasing connection among middle school children and members of their intergenerational circle. The result has been an amazing collaboration designed with all the participants in mind and humorously titled the Zoomster Party program, as it truly is a weekly party inside of an ever-changing tapestry of Zoom squares.

Every child is welcome to join in the fun, and each is free to invite other special members of their intergenerational circle. These individuals may include siblings, aunts, uncles, grandparents, neighbors, cousins, and friends. Our participant population currently ranges from four to 87 years of age. There is no sign up required and no penalty for canceling. The goal is to make this experience super easy for participants by allowing them to join whenever convenient.

As the Zoomster Party facilitator, I organize weekly Zoomster Party content. Consistent program components include opening with participants sharing “peaks and pits” from their week and closing with participants sharing “acts of kindness” and “silly jokes.” Many of the children especially love sharing their peaks and pits and say this is the highlight of the Zoomster Party. The “Mystery Guest” portion of the Zoomster Party keeps everyone engaged and excited for the next meeting. These prearranged guests offer an “element of surprise” that captivates everyone. All mystery guests brings their own unique personality and talents to their participation. Mystery guests have included my fellow classmates: one who taught the art of juggling and another who shared photos from his Egyptian travels. A retired Senior Master Sergeant and Chief of Police at the United States Air Force wanted the children to see the softer side of those in his profession and chose to share his time-elapsed home video of baby robins hatching and leaving their nest. An associate professor of pharmacology and toxicology discussed the liver and ways to maintain a strong immune system. A special education teacher helped participants make their own ice cream. A well-known yoga teacher with an Amazon yoga series engaged participants through yoga and meditation. The middle-school principal appeared from his home and surprised everyone by joining with his band members. The children were flabbergasted to see their beloved principal outside of his usual suit and tie, and playing the drums!
Of course, two of my personal favorite guests were my professors, Dr. Pool and Dr. Schmuldt. Both of whom graciously supported my venture by validating my abilities as a counselor-in-training and making appearances in this virtual group as mystery guests, bringing their insight, wisdom, and fun to all who attended. The children still giggle when they talk about the “Would You Rather” game facilitated by Dr. Pool and the “Sea Creatures Art” facilitated by Dr. Schmuldt. One last fan favorite was mystery guest Nurse Pat. She is a retired school nurse and Dr. Schmuldt’s mother who graciously and thoroughly answered all of the Zoomsters medically related COVID-19 questions while adorning her hand made nurse’s cap.

As we settled into our first few Zoomster Parties, several participants shared the “peak” of their week was attending the Zoomster Party, followed up with “I have no pits to share.” Parents reached out to let me know how much they appreciated such a creative, fun, and importantly safe experience for their children during this difficult time. Parents shared their gratitude for having the ability to refocus on other priorities while their children attended.

There have been several magical moments throughout this program. One little boy, age 10, said to me, “It’s like you’re helping our brains feel better, and I love it.” Another little girl, age 11, said, “I didn’t cry this week because I knew I had the Zoomster Party to look forward to, I need something to look forward to, and I could see my friends!” Finally, when I shared with the group that I considered ending the Zoomster Party program as summer approached, certain the children would prefer enjoying outside activities, one little girl’s comment changed that idea. She quickly replied, “What? You mean this has to end? I need this in my life!”

This Zoomster Party program retains a commitment to creating live, interactive, meaningful opportunities for safe and joyful connections during this unpredictable time. The positive feedback and lasting impacts expressed by everyone involved are beyond measure. I am certain that the educational foundation afforded me by the University of the Cumberlands, and the direct support and encouragement given to me by my professors, propelled me forward with confidence to create and facilitate this beloved group which continues today.
Excellence in the Field—Social Media Ethics: What and What Not To Do
Dr. Michelle E. Wade,
Alpha Eta Chapter

In 2010, I presented on ethics and social media in my advanced ethics course for a group project.

That project started a career trajectory leading to me being considered an expert on the topic. Having presented and written numerous conceptual pieces over the last ten years, I realize that utilizing social media as a professional counselor should always be a topic for ample consideration before diving in because of the potential ethical quandaries inherent to social media use.

Social Media Statistics

Why should professional counselors even care about social media? In 2010, Erik Qualman coined the term socialnomics, “the value created and shared via social media and its efficient influence on outcomes [economic, political, relational, etc].” And for ten years, Qualman has kept track of statistics related to how social media has influenced these realms. According to Qualman (2019), 93% of buying decisions are based on social media. Two in three people will receive their news from social media. Fifty percent of the world’s population is under the age of 30 and, therefore, are digital natives. Within the United States (U.S.), 74 million people qualify within the Generation Z category, making it the largest generation and a generation that has absolutely grown up within the realm of social media (Doyle, 2020). In a comparison of population numbers, the U.S. is barely in the top 10 (9th) and China is number five, with Facebook and YouTube coming in at numbers one and two (Qualman, 2019). Ortiz-Ospina (2019) explained that two-thirds of internet users have a social media presence, which translates to one out of three people. Additionally, adults in the U.S. spend more than six hours a day on digital media (Ortiz-Ospina, 2019). Before arguing it is a generational issue, Pew Research (2019) showed that as of February 2019, all age ranges are utilizing social media. Usage rates are expectedly highest for 18-29 year olds at 90%, while 82% of 30-49 year olds, 69% of 50-64 year olds, and 40% of 65+ year olds are also using social media regularly. With the recent COVID pandemic, there was a spike in a specific social media app, TikTok, that is not reflected in these statistics.

Doyle (2020) reported that in the U.S., TikTok brought in 45.4 million unique mobile
visitors in January and February 2020 and 68 million in March and April. Also, the app may have originally been targeted to younger users, but the percentage of U.S. TikTok users by age is increasing. While the highest age group is still 10-19 year olds at 32.5%, there are 7.1% of TikTok users within the 50+ year old category. From a cultural standpoint, social media is a new language and culture for people of all ages to learn to navigate.

**How to Use Social Media**

In addition to Section H within the ACA (2014) Code of Ethics, ACA (2019) released social media tips for professional counselors. There are three main ways that counselors may use social media: advertising, educating, and advocating (Wade, 2014). The tips provide good guidance, but this article intends to look at the concepts presented by ACA within the Code of Ethics and its tips sheet within those contexts.

**Advertising**

As mentioned in the social media statistics, 93% of buying decisions are based on social media (Qualman, 2019). Therefore, it seems prudent for counselors to consider social media as a source of advertisement for their practices. However, counselors need to ensure their professional social media presence cannot be connected to their personal social media presence. Potential and current clients may intentionally or inadvertently discover a counselor’s personal social media presence if they have access to the same information as the social media site. Social media sites tend to make recommendations of who to friend and follow based on similar information collected. Additionally, if a client has the counselor’s mobile number, the counselor’s personal account may be suggested as a potential connection. Counselors may want to consider signing up for free internet-based phone numbers, like Google Voice numbers, or having distinct business lines if affordable.

Another advertising consideration is internet reviews and searches. Yelp and Google reviews or searches can increase the likelihood a particular counselor is the one chosen to provide services. However, if clients post bad reviews, a counselor cannot respond back publicly in the way another business could because it would break confidentiality. Since counselors cannot prevent reviews from being posted about them, Rob Reinhardt (personal communication, October, 2018), suggested having colleagues provide reviews for each other to balance out potentially bad reviews, and to have some control over the narrative. Keep in mind, however, the possible need for distancing of professional and personal social media presences if providing these reviews.

**Educating**

Mental health awareness and combating the stigma of mental illness is an ethical imperative, according to C.6.e: Contributing to the Public Good (Pro Bono Publico) of the
Code of Ethics (ACA, 2014). Social media allows counselors a large platform to provide information to the public on such topics. When done correctly and ethically, counselors can help destigmatize seeking help and normalize counseling for everyday stress and wellness, not just severe mental illness. Numerous counseling organizations and professionals utilize social media as a way to educate throughout the year, but especially during months dedicated to mental health awareness (i.e., October – Suicide Prevention Month, April – Mental Health Awareness Month). I say correctly and ethically, because unfortunately, I have seen social media used very incorrectly. For instance, recently on TikTok, a high-profile TikToker, Scott D Henry, duetted a video with a person who identified themselves in another video as an NCC. He started his video with the statement, “this is why I don’t trust counselors or therapists” (personal communication, August 13, 2020). The NCC (I did verify the individual’s credentials) stated in their original video:

Narcissists can only be in a relationship with someone who is willing to betray themselves, if you’re willing to betray yourself that actually means you’re very manipulative. You’re willing to do something that’s not in your best interest to get someone to stay, in order to get someone to be a little bit nicer, in order to get someone to think better of you (Aug 13 - personal communication @scottdhenry)

The opening statement Scott makes alone is reason enough to be concerned about how professionals use social media. Misinformation can be easily spread, or complex concepts can be attempted to be condensed into bite-sized chunks that are inappropriate for the platform chosen.

For an example of how to use social media to educate appropriately, there is the Instagram account @Beneath.the_surface that is focused on educating and destigmatizing mental illness, particularly within the African American community. A recent post on September 29, 2020 was that “Self-care is a daily practice. Not something you reserve for a reward after an accomplishment” (personal communication). The resident-in-counseling who operates the account appropriately self-disclosed that they have to remind themselves of this and then challenged their followers to think about how they care for themselves. Another example was a posting in which the resident-in-counseling challenged followers to explore the numerous reasons to go to therapy and how therapy is an investment in oneself and how to go about finding a counselor who is right for them.

Advocating

Beneath.the_surface is an account that advocates as well as educates, and within the professional counseling realm, that line is sometimes blurred, especially in social media. However, social media has been utilized as a way to alert professionals and the public to the need to reach out to legislators regarding counselors’ coverage in TRICARE, the VA, and
Medicare, to name a few issues. Recently, Congress passed a bill directing the Office of Personnel Management to create the first ever federal government classification for mental health counselors, rather than having to apply under a more generic term. This was largely due to AMHCA advocacy work that was advertised through their social media platforms and shared by their members through their own social media platforms.

Additionally, as counselors advocate for social justice and reform, they can share and reach more individuals through social media than perhaps they can in person. However, from an ethics standpoint, professional counselors need to be aware their clients may see what they are sharing and advocating for and that can have some impact on the therapeutic relationship. Additionally, the client may never realize and/or mention this within session. For instance, if a client sees a counselor likes a post from their local news station, that their client also follows, in favor of a recent court decision made by the U.S. Supreme Court and the client disagrees with the decision, the counselor may never know the client saw that “like” and connected it to the counselor. The client may never even realize that it has impacted their view of the counselor and, therefore, the counseling relationship. For this reason, it is even suggested that a counselor’s personal social media presence be anonymized in a way that they cannot be recognized when posting on their personal social media sites. In other words, perhaps using a variant of the counselor’s real name and not necessarily the counselor’s own pictures.

**Conclusion**

Erik Qualman (2019) said “We don’t have a choice whether we digitally transform, the choice is how well we do it,” and he is right. Social media is a prevalent part of our everyday interactions, whether we want it to be or not. As professional counselors, we need to learn how to embrace it, or at the very least understand it. And if we do embrace it to utilize it in an ethical manner that considers the long-term potential risks, we should always keep in mind the counselor’s driving primary responsibility: A.1.a. “to respect the dignity and promote the welfare of the client” (ACA, 2014).
Excellence in the Field—
Telemental Health Counseling: Ethical, Legal, and Practical Considerations

Dr. Nicole A. Stargell,
Phi Sigma Chapter

Telemental health counseling occurs when a professional counselor is located in one place, a client is located in a different place, and mental health counseling is provided through the use of technology (HRSA, 2019; NBCC, 2020). Many different terms are used to describe therapy that occurs via technology (e.g., distance professional services, telebehavioral health, online therapy, cyber counseling), but the term telemental health counseling will be used in this article to refer to mental health counseling services provided via technology. According to the American Counseling Association ([ACA], 2014, Section H) Code of Ethics, professional counselors are responsible for understanding the evolving nature of telemental health counseling and adapting professional practice in order to uphold relevant legal and ethical considerations. In this article, the benefits and risks of telemental health counseling are explored. Legal and ethical imperatives for telemental health counseling are outlined. Finally, practical considerations for professional practice are provided.

Defining Telemental Health Counseling

In general, the kinds of technology that are used in telemental health counseling include emails, phone calls, web chats, and video calls. There are many benefits associated with telemental health counseling, including accessibility, flexibility, privacy, cost-effectiveness, and clinical effectiveness. Clients do not have to leave the comfort of their own homes to receive telemental health counseling, and professional counselors get the rare opportunity to see their clients’ home lives. Telemental health counseling is a way for us to maintain the excellent work we do even during a public health crisis such as the current COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, client access to providers across their entire state increases when the barrier of physical distance is removed. Finally, although further research is needed in the area of telemental health counseling effectiveness, the United States Veterans Association has determined that there is not a significant difference in mental health outcomes associated with in-person counseling versus telemental health counseling (Darkins, 2016; Godleski et al., 2012). Indeed, professional counselors can address a variety of mental health concerns via technology (Backhaus et al., 2012; Springer et al., 2020).

Ethical Considerations

Although there are significant benefits
associated with telemental health counseling, there are also significant risks that must be explained to clients and actively considered by counselors. A primary concern is the risk to confidentiality and privacy (NBCC, 2016). Written communication can inadvertently be shared with individuals who are not the intended recipient, especially if those written materials are stored and sent electronically. Furthermore, unintended individuals can potentially access live telemental health sessions or electronic health record systems using technology. Some clients might feel quite comfortable accessing services from the comfort of their own homes, but others might have a hard time finding a safe and private space to access services. It is important for professional counselors to assess client safety on an ongoing basis and help clients locate a suitable space for counseling. The use of sound machines (even on a client’s phone application) can help reduce what is overheard by others. Professionals working with minors should preemptively set boundaries around how and when guardians will participate in sessions. Children often need a guardian present to support them throughout the session, whereas teens might prefer that guardians attend the last few minutes of the session so that they can be informed of the day’s progress.

Telemental health counseling is not appropriate for all clients. Professional counselors should determine the appropriate level of care for each client individually. Some things to consider include a client’s access to technology, comfort with technology, access to a private and safe location to participate in counseling, and their ability to pay attention and engage in therapy via distance. Although a large portion of telemental health counseling is talk therapy, counselors can get quite creative in telemental health sessions (e.g., playing interactive games, sending worksheets in the mail). If clients are not well-suited for telemental health counseling, reasonable referrals should be made.

Finally, technology does not always work the way we hope. It is important that telemental health counselors master their own technology so that they can help clients troubleshoot any issues they experience (Darkins, 2016). Additionally, safety procedures are slightly different when conducting telemental health counseling, and professionals should verify the identity and location of the client before every session (NBCC, 2020). Clients under the age of 18
should have a guardian in the household at all times who can be contacted in case of an emergency. All of the legal and ethical guidelines for in-person counseling must be followed with the additional considerations that apply to telemental health counseling specifically.

**Legal Considerations**

Professional counselors may only practice in the state(s) in which they are licensed. Although NBCC’s (2020) Board-Certified Telemental Health Provider (BC-TMH) credential is a recommended way to ensure excellence in telemental health counseling, it is not a license to practice. Telemental health counselors are operating under their state license whether they are practicing in person or via technology. In general, telemental health counseling occurs where both the client and counselor are located, but professional counselors should consult with their state’s licensing board to determine the parameters of their license.

Professional counselors are bound by the *Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996* (HIPAA), and are required to protect sensitive patient health information (PHI) such as client names, phone numbers, email addresses, and dates related to the provision of healthcare services (CDC, 2018). It is important that professional counselors implement as many safeguards as possible to ensure clients’ privacy and confidentiality. Safeguards that are especially relevant for telemental health counseling include the following:

- password-protecting any electronic device used for business purposes (and asking clients to do the same),
- using a password-protected router for wireless internet services (and asking clients to do the same),
- encrypting any cell phone that is used for business purposes,
- using encrypted email service,
- avoiding the use of texting for anything except scheduling,
- securing a *Business Associate Agreement* (BAA) for electronic health record and video platforms,
- storing electronic records on a password-protected hard drive, and
- receiving electronic payments using a HIPAA-compliant service (CDC, 2018; NBCC, 2016).

These considerations should be made even when using technology for scheduling purposes only. It should be noted that true landlines (not satellite landlines) are HIPAA-compliant, and accessing internet through an Ethernet cable plugged directly into a computer removes the need for a router, which eliminates that as a security risk. Professional counselors do not need a BAA with phone and internet providers due to the HIPAA conduit exception.

**Practical Considerations**

Using the most basic definition of telemental health counseling, even the simplest use of technology for scheduling (e.g., telephone, email), is subject to intentional legal and ethical considerations,
and professional counselors should take care to remove client identifiers and other PHI from any electronic scheduling activities. Professionals providing telemental health counseling should intentionally determine how they will schedule sessions and send reminders. Professional counselors should determine the methods they will use to deliver telemental health services (e.g., videoconference, web chatting, telephone), follow appropriate legal and ethical guidelines, and confirm with any relevant third-party payers that the services can be reimbursable.

Professional counselors are required to maintain records of all written communication with clients (including emails, text messages, and web chats) even if the communication is just about scheduling and other logistical issues (NBCC, 2016). Standard text messages are generally not suggested because professionals cannot verify the recipient of the messages, they can be easily intercepted, and they remain on the conduit’s servers indefinitely. As such, professional counselors should utilize a web-based chat program with a BAA if clients prefer to chat. Records of all written communication with clients should be maintained for a minimum of five years or the length of time required by relevant state laws (NBCC, 2016).

Professional counselors who utilize paper notes for telemental health sessions should keep the notes locked just as they would for in-person sessions. Professional counselors may accept checks through the mail if they prefer not to use a HIPAA-compliant electronic platform, and correspondence from clients should go to the place of business, not the counselor’s home. The United States Postal Service is an acceptable means of transmitting PHI, and professional counselors should use a minimal, yet sufficient, return address if sending paperwork to clients (e.g., counselor last name and street address without the name of the counseling organization).

Clients must be in a private and safe location while receiving counseling. Telemental health sessions should be rescheduled if clients are in a public place or using a public wireless network (e.g., the wifi at Starbucks) without a Virtual Private Network (VPN), which makes your online activity untraceable. Counselors and clients should never operate motor vehicles or engage in potentially dangerous activities while in session. Relatedly, the use of substances is prohibited during telemental health counseling sessions just as it would be in person. Professional counselors should take care that their backgrounds are professional and that they will not be interrupted in session. Clients should be reminded that counselors will use everything observed in a client’s background as assessment information.

**Conclusion**

Professional counselors have the unique opportunity to connect with clients in their own homes via telemental health counseling. With this convenience comes additional responsibilities that we must address. Although the current COVID-19 pandemic has brought this topic to the forefront of our
thoughts, we have been using technology to support our work as counselors for years. With some intentional research and consideration, we can collectively strengthen the profession and serve our communities with excellence. For more information on telemental health counseling, watch the recorded CSI International webinar from April of 2020.

Dr. Nicole A. Stargell, LCMHCA, LSC, NCC, BC-TMH

Want more resources for CSI chapters? Check out the Chapter Training Modules at csi-net.org
Online teaching has quickly become the new normal for many counselor educators. Without much (if any) teaching, training, or experience, many instructors have moved entire courses online. As the next generation of counselors and counselor educators attend class from their living rooms, educators must be cognizant of the trauma their students have experienced and are experiencing during these unprecedented health and racial pandemics. When teaching online, there is a lot to manage, and navigating this online world with students can be challenging. It is important that educators adhere to personal wellness and boundaries and are not serving as counselors or mental health professionals for students within the online classroom setting, but rather serving as the bridge to connecting to the resources needed.

With a new semester upon us, educators are encouraged to teach from a trauma-informed approach during COVID-19. But what exactly does this mean? Angela Watson, author, board certified teacher, and instructional coach, encourages instructors to think of trauma informed teaching not as a “curriculum, set of prescribed strategies, or something you need to ‘add to your plate.’ It’s more like a lens through which you choose to view your students which will help you build better relationships, prevent conflict, and teach them effectively” (Watson, 2018, para. 2). It is important to develop an awareness of our students, and our own, experiences related to various levels of trauma as we meet students where they are in the virtual classroom.

It is important to consider the definition of trauma when teaching from a trauma-informed approach. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) views trauma through three E’s: events, experiences, and effects. Event(s) is related to physical or psychological harm or the threat of harm. This threat can occur once or over a period of time and is applied to all types of harms such as physical violence or natural disasters. Experience of event(s) is related to how an individual conceptualizes what is happening around them. The way individuals experience an event and assign meaning to that incident is oftentimes determined by their age, experiences, social supports, and cultural beliefs. Effects are the most critical component of trauma and gain the most attention. The effects of a trauma vary greatly between individuals (SAMHSA, 2014). To create a trauma-informed online classroom, we suggest some
approaches to help meet students where they are during these uncertain times while also helping instructors juggle demanding roles.

**Before Class**

As you prepare for a new semester of classes, think about creating a welcome letter and Google form to gauge difficulties students may have before the semester begins (Smith et al., 2018). Along with a welcome letter, consider the structure and design of your syllabus. Make sure the material is organized in a way that is easy to read so students can locate content with ease and also find important information and deadlines in one central location. One way to achieve this goal is to create a master calendar with all the main assignments, due dates, and important information as a quick reference. During this preparation period, take a moment to reflect on how you are feeling and what you need as you start the semester and class, including sleep, rest, or connection with a colleague/friend. Students are watching how counselor educators engage in the virtual classroom spaces. This is an opportunity to model healthy behaviors.

Due to the nature of students’ individual living situations, it may be important to consider offering students different ways to share knowledge. Incorporating assignments that can be submitted via video, such as FlipGrid or Voicethread submissions can provide alternate ways for students to engage with each other and the material, while also building community. Additionally, consider giving students access to content and material earlier with options such as opening up modules in advance so students can engage at different times. When opening class content, consider introducing content each week in a fairly regular schedule and not all at once in the LMS (Learning Management System) to reduce the feeling of being overwhelmed by massive amounts of content. Keep the pace, amount of information, and structure manageable. As the semester progresses, check in with students about the amount of content provided each week and pace of the course to learn how students are receiving the information in order to make any adjustments. Also consider adding university and community resources that extend beyond the class (i.e., COVID, counseling center, advocacy).

Consider making online learning spaces available before class begins to give students the chance to connect with each other much like on-campus classes where students can arrive before the faculty. When offering space before class, share with students the space is optional and not required, but rather a time for connection and networking with one another. Oftentimes, authentic connections and conversations may ensue from these opportunities. Before instruction begins, incorporate time for calm, rest, and gratitude in both the synchronous and asynchronous classroom spaces. Drawing from a trauma-sensitive approach, creating synchronous spaces that exude safety, consistency, and trust can be imperative. One way to create a welcoming space as students enter the synchronous classroom is to stream calming music to set the tone for class.
During Class

Creating a safe environment is paramount, both in our LMS and “live” classroom spaces. Invite students to engage but understand students may be “showing up” with various emotions and stress levels each day. For asynchronous instruction, start the week with a quick recorded video welcoming students and offering words of encouragement. When teaching a synchronous class, consider starting with a grounding exercise, to exude a warm, welcoming, and calm inviting space. Consider inviting students to share words of gratitude or good news happening in their lives.

Just as professional counselors check in with clients, check in with your students. The check-in can take many forms: poll questions, mental health check-in on a quick Likert scale, a thumbs up, or body language can ensure students are physically and socially engaged. From that check-in, give students the option to opt-in or opt-out of activities such as taking a mental health day, participating in class discussions, determining if and when to turn their camera on, and engaging in the breakout room. Everyone has difficult days. Some content and topics in our classes may be challenging to discuss for students. Giving options for “opting-in” by engaging or “opting out,” such as turning off their camera or not engaging in discussion, can create agency and provide students with choices in the class. As you check-in with students, you may notice some students share that they are experiencing a challenging day or week. In these moments, reach out to students who may appear to be struggling during class through private chats to offer comfort, support, and resources.

Many students are experiencing trauma as they come to our classes. Acknowledge the trauma and name it. Share with students from the beginning and throughout the course that you recognize these are challenging and uncertain times due to the pandemic and racial inequities and tension in our community and world. When thinking about the trauma our students are experiencing, instructors need to recognize and teach through the lens that not all students are the same. Consider the multiple identities of students and intersectionality related to gender, race, culture, historical context, and more. When you grade and respond to students, use their
name and engage in a way that is personalized and demonstrate that they are “seen.” Encourage community within the classroom. Utilize breakout rooms for students to engage in small groups, feel connected, and to support one another. Ground yourself in the process as well. As a suggestion, instructors can encourage drinking water, bringing food to class, and even incorporating stress balls to keep grounded for stress-release. In addition, consider a self-care assignment whereby students are encouraged to experience self-care “in action” to promote wellness and invite students to share their strategies with one another to foster connection and learning between students.

**Tips, Resources, and Best Practices**

Remain flexible with yourself and your students and give grace always. In preparing to teach online, a few questions to reflect upon could include: What do you want to convey throughout your virtual classroom? How do you want to be present online? How can you demonstrate empathy and embrace your own humanity? As you reflect upon these questions, remember to reach out to colleagues and link arms with other faculty who are navigating online learning during these uncertain times. Instructors can learn so much from each other and offer support along the way.

Recognize (or be cognizant of) students’ stories and situations with regard to their capacity and level of motivation in our current context to engage in learning. Be kind, gentle, and understanding. As instructors, embracing a student-centered approach to our teaching may require us to become even more aware of students’ unique circumstances. Defining trauma and seeking to better understand the impact of an individual’s lived experience can be essential to meet students where they are (Souers & Hall, 2016). An additional suggestion is to remain connected in various ways throughout the semester in both the asynchronous and synchronous learning environments: physical distancing does not mean “socially” distancing from each other. Intentionally create and invite “informal” spaces in various platforms for students to engage, share, and connect.

As the instructor, think about your own bandwidth as you create assignments. Take into account the size of your class and the types of assignments you are offering to assess students’ learning. Place yourself in your students shoes as you craft and develop assignments. Are there alternatives to offer students to demonstrate their knowledge? Offering several ways to turn in assignments can be sensitive to students’ needs and individualized situations. For example, permitting students to select whether they prefer to turn in an assignment as a video submission, written paper, or narrated PowerPoint presentation can empower students to make their own choice and determine their capacity for completing the assignment effectively. If students have questions or concerns, be willing to stay after or find alternative times to meet with students - their lives and schedules are different too.
Finally, and perhaps most importantly, keep in mind no one can pour from an empty cup. Today and always, it is essential that each individual takes care of oneself and each other. Students are watching as Counselor Educators model through teaching and actions how to care for them and one another.

Dr. Angie Smith, LCMHC-S, ACS, NCC

Erik Messinger, MA, LCMHCA, NCC
Counselor educators bear a tremendous responsibility to their counselors-in-training (CITs) and the clients/students CITs serve. Although many counselor educators have previous experience with online teaching, the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020 has required the transition to more online learning and, as such, has tasked counselor educators to deeply examine the effectiveness of their online teaching practices. Educators may tend to rely on anecdotal feedback and annual program data review to assess student learning, but we propose a more strategic application of research practices to evaluate teaching effectiveness and student learning. Specifically, in this article, we present the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) and explore strategies for applying SoTL to counselor education.

There is debate about the formal definition of SoTL (Gale, 2009), but a general definition is that it is an interdisciplinary approach to investigating how we teach and learn (Miller-Young & Yeo, 2015). SoTL applies traditional research principles to examine the factors that contribute to effective teaching and student learning. Unlike discipline-based educational research studies (DBERS), SoTL cuts across fields of study to determine the fundamental mechanisms of teaching and learning. SoTL studies help faculty focus on improving their personal teaching while contributing to the knowledge base on the mechanisms that promote learning across disciplines. Chick (n.d.) stated that SoTL involves the following:

(a) asking meaningful questions about student learning, and about the teaching activities designed to facilitate student learning; (b) answering those questions by making relevant student learning visible to gather evidence of thinking and learning, and then systematically analyzing this evidence; (c) sharing the results of that analysis publicly to invite peer review and to contribute to broader bodies of knowledge on student learning; and (d) aiming to improve student learning by strengthening the practice of teaching (one’s own and others’) (para 2).

SoTL research typically takes the form of a What works? or a What is happening? study (Hutchings, 2000). Although most of the content covered in this article centers on a
“what works” approach, faculty may need to conduct “what is happening” studies to better understand how to intervene or revise their course formats and/or deliveries to improve student learning. To this end, Miller and Sisk (2019) proposed using the Gaps Model of Service Quality (Zeithaml et al., 1990) to compare students’ and faculty expectations and perceptions in order to identify gaps therein.

By design, SoTL research is intended to be rigorous and utilized for cross-discipline application. However, in this article, we present information that can be adapted to course-based action research that informs instructor practice. Indeed, we find value in instructor-led evaluation of teaching effectiveness and learning solely for the purpose of quality improvement. As such, faculty may determine if their application of the SoTL principles is intended from a practitioner or researcher perspective—for professional development or cross-discipline consumption.

Previous SoTL research has provided a compelling, though limited, foundation for examining online teaching practices. Gomez-Rey, Barbera, and Fernández-Navarro (2018) surveyed students and subsequently derived six roles filled by faculty in an online learning context: pedagogical, course designer, social, life skills promoter, technical, and managerial. It is evident that faculty fill multiple roles within the classroom, and their performance in each of these roles may bear on their overall teaching effectiveness and/or students’ learning. Although it is beyond the scope of this article to parcel out these six key roles, faculty may utilize measures and methods to evaluate their effectiveness within and across these six key roles.

**Measuring Teaching Effectiveness**

The question of faculty effectiveness is not easily answered. Indeed, many limitations exist to Student Evaluations of Instruction (SEIs; see Carpenter, Witherby, & Tauber, 2020). In pursuit of understanding regarding the qualities of effective online instructors, Frazer, Sullivan, Weatherspoon, and Hussey (2017) conducted a focus group study with nursing faculty to explore “teaching effectiveness and quality indicators in an asynchronous online environment” (p. 1). Frazer and colleagues (2017) found that faculty perceive online teaching effectiveness to be highest when faculty (a) facilitate student learning, (b) attempt to feel connected with students, (c) share their experiences, (d) attempt to remain approachable, (e) establish mutual comfort, and (f) are responsive to students’ needs (p. 3). With this knowledge, faculty can conduct course-based SoTL research to examine the degree to which they achieve these six feats, rather than to focus on global evaluations of student satisfaction that may not actually assess student learning or teaching effectiveness.

Conversely, Jones (2012) examined teaching effectiveness from a student perspective. Jones found that students report higher levels of teaching effectiveness when they feel stimulated in their learning, and students report higher overall course value when they are required to complete relevant
and practical assignments. Faculty can pay careful attention to developing an online atmosphere that is engaging and conducive to intellectual stimulation, rather than focused predominantly on passive learning, and can utilize assignments that have a clear application to the field of professional counseling. When attempting to measure their teaching effectiveness and student learning, faculty may explore means by which to examine student engagement and students’ perceived relevancy of the coursework to their future professional application.

There are several methods of evaluating teaching effectiveness and learning in virtual settings, including both formative and summative approaches. For example, there are a few formal assessments of online teaching that can be used both during the semester and after course completion. This method of appraisal may be especially important, as researchers have found that traditional teaching evaluations may not be an effective method of assessing teaching and learning in online settings (Thomas & Graham, 2017). The Student Evaluation of Online Teaching Effectiveness (SEOTE; Bangert, 2008) is founded in constructivist pedagogy and is based on Chickering and Gamson’s Seven Principles of Effective Teaching (1987). It includes 23 questions, and four factors: student faculty contact, collaboration among students, active learning, and time on task (Bangert, 2008). The Online Teaching Effectiveness Scale (OTE; Reyes-Fournier et al., 2020) includes 12 items and four factors: presence, expertise, engagement, and facilitation. Though both assessments have validity and reliability evidence, there is little research on these assessments with students of diverse race and ethnicity. Multicultural awareness is an important aspect of SoTL, and therefore faculty should be aware of this limitation when using these assessments (Kaplan & Miller, 2007).

Similarly, faculty can measure student learning outcomes via formal approaches, including online quizzes and tests, and standardized rubrics. However, counselor educators should be cautious of implementing assessments that were developed for face-to-face administration. Although there is software that can promote the use of traditional testing and quizzes (e.g., Examity, Respondus Lockdown Browser), researchers have noted that simply administering an assessment that was developed for face-to-face learning may decrease student performance and can compound the stigma and frustration some students express in the inadequacy of online classrooms (Barber, King, & Buchanan, 2014). Alternatively, faculty can develop rubrics and assessments that reflect the unique context of an online learning environment. For instance, instead of implementing a timed, knowledge-based test, faculty may assign an in-depth project that focuses more on comprehension and application of knowledge learned in the course (Barkley & Major, 2017).

Although formalized assessments are helpful, counselor educators can also use informal methods to evaluate learning in their online classrooms. For example, faculty can create online, anonymous polls of
student learning outcomes via online survey software (e.g., Qualtrics, Survey Monkey, Red Cap). Other researchers have recommended engaging in peer-review of online courses by both content experts and faculty from other disciplines (Donnelli-Sallee, 2018). Informal assessment can also be utilized for measuring student learning, such as the use of online games to evaluate the information learned (e.g., Kahoot!). Faculty can also engage students in discussion or have them engage in freewriting at the end of class regarding the material learned. Discussion and journal prompts can be based on what the students learned, how the concepts apply to counseling, and/or how the concepts relate to material they learned previously in the course (Barkley & Major, 2017).

**Continuous Evaluation**

Counselor educators should consider feedback from assessment practically and in terms of solutions (Heinz, 2016). If student learning outcomes are not being met, faculty can problem-solve creative ways to engage students in the virtual classroom, including using infographics, or having students create podcasts and video case presentations (Heinz, 2016). It may also be advantageous to collaborate with colleagues. There are several online social media groups to support faculty in online teaching, for example, the Facebook Higher Ed Learning Collective (n.d.) is a group that was developed to help faculty in higher education navigate online teaching and learning in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Finally, counselor educators should engage in continuous, systematic evaluation, as the impact of strategies and approaches fluctuates with different students, and the personal and global context in which they are learning (Vela, 2020).
CSI International Elections
2020

Voting for Chi Sigma Iota International officers occurs each year by a collective vote per active chapter. Visit the CSI website for instructions about how your chapter can vote for CSI’s President-Elect and Treasurer this year - as well as a sample message your chapter can use to encourage your members to participate.

This year, CSI members will be voting for the CSI Executive Council President-Elect and Treasurer officer positions. All active chapter members are invited to vote through their home chapters for the candidate they believe will serve CSI best in these respective positions.

Chapter Faculty Advisors can download a list of their chapter members from the CSI Member Management System. (Sign In > Chapter Login for CFAs & Group Admins (use chapter username and password) > CFAs & Chapters > CFAs > CFA MMS > View/Export Member List)

During October, each chapter’s leaders should contact their members about the CSI chapter voting procedures. Once all individual votes within a chapter are received, Chapter Faculty Advisors will tally their chapter members’ votes and report the candidates receiving the highest number using the online Elections Ballot no later than 5:00 PM EST on December 1, 2020. Overall, the potential candidates who receive the highest number of chapter votes will be elected to CSI office.

It is helpful to remember that chapter social media sites (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) are a viable way to communicate information about the CSI election process at the chapter level. We want to urge chapters to include active alumni members in their election outreach efforts. This year’s candidate information is available through our website, Facebook, Exemplar, and the E-News.
Biographical Statement
Dr. Jake J. Protivnak is a Professor and Coordinator of the Counseling Program at Youngstown State University (YSU). He is the Chapter Faculty Advisor of Eta Chapter and he serves on the CSI Executive Council as the Treasurer of Chi Sigma Iota-International. Dr. Protivnak was inducted in CSI as a master’s student at Kent State University. He served as the Alpha Chapter President and as a CSI Leadership Intern as a doctoral student in the Counselor Education program at Ohio University. Dr. Protivnak is a Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor-Supervisor (Ohio), a Licensed School Counselor (Ohio), and a Board Certified Counselor (NBCC). Dr. Protivnak has authored 30+ articles/book chapters and delivered 100+ presentations on counselor education, supervision, and counseling adolescents and young adults. He has served as President of the Ohio Counseling Association, and he has been the recipient of multiple awards including the CSI Outstanding Chapter Faculty Advisor award.

Goal Statement/Vision for Serving as CSI President
It is a true honor to be nominated to serve as the CSI President. CSI helps members grow both professionally and personally, and one of the joys of my career has been observing these transformations. CSI is the primary counseling organization focused on the development of leaders who passionately advocate for our profession, and it has provided me with a vehicle to become involved in professional service, develop my counselor identity, and promote our wonderful profession. The leadership opportunities and the mentorship that I received as a member of CSI have shaped who I am, and it would be a privilege to be able to pay it forward by serving as the CSI President. If elected President, I will support the mission of CSI through
the following three goals:

1. **Promote Cultural Competence of Membership**

   CSI members have an opportunity and responsibility to be leaders who advocate for social justice issues impacting clients in their communities. As a professional honor society, we should demonstrate advanced multicultural knowledge and skills, as well as, the internal dispositions of citizens who deeply care and take action regarding the injustices in our community. I will provide opportunities for members to listen, learn, and act for equity for our clients and neighbors. I will advance initiatives (e.g., professional development, cross-association collaborations, discussion groups, resource allocation) that help CSI members continue to develop multicultural skills needed to meet the unique needs of individuals within our communities.

2. **Increase Resources Provided to CSI Chapters**

   Counseling students often struggle, working multiple jobs and utilizing student loans to cover basic living expenses. The payment of a CSI membership requires a sacrifice. As such, every dollar received from our membership should be utilized in the most effective way possible to advance our mission. As President, I will effectively manage and strategically grow our financial resources, thus enabling CSI to provide more resources (e.g., grants, rebates, materials) back to local chapters for initiatives that benefit chapter members and their community.

3. **Facilitate Connections and Mentoring**

   We truly are stronger together than apart! We are at our best when we have opportunities to support, mentor, and help each other grow as leaders and advocates. The global pandemic has caused many counseling programs to reduce in-person classes and many students are completing coursework online. We are becoming more physically isolated from our classmates, faculty, friends, family, and our community. I will strive to find creative ways that chapters can build online and in-person relationships with each other at the chapter level and across chapters. It is through the exchange of ideas, warm connections, and support that our members can find their voices as leaders and advocates.

I have served as Chapter Faculty Advisor at Youngstown State University for 10+ years and mentoring students, growing our CSI chapter, supporting other CSI chapters, and identifying ways our chapters can help support social change has been my passion. I am enthusiastic for the opportunity to serve as your President!
For the Position of CSI President,
Dr. Elisabeth Suarez

Biographical Statement
Dr. Elisabeth Suarez graduated from the University of Northern Colorado with her Ph.D. in Counselor Education and Supervision, with a minor in Applied Statistics. She has been a counselor educator for the past 23 years, teaching both masters and doctoral students in the traditional, hybrid, and online classroom. Dr. Suarez has been a Chapter Faculty Advisor at the last three universities where she has served. She enjoys mentoring students and helping them develop their leadership and research skills. Modeling her servant leadership skills in her interactions with CSI students and others, Dr. Suarez often invites students to present at regional and national counseling conferences with her. She is happy supporting and encouraging students to explore new ways to build their leadership service and scholarship. Dr. Suarez also serves as a CACREP site visitor, evaluating M.A., M.S., Ed.D., and Ph.D. programs in counseling. Her professional presentations and articles have been mostly on effective and creative andragogy, multicultural supervision, research methods, and statistics. Dr. Suarez currently serves on the ACES Anti-Racist Pedagogy task force.

Goals Statement
It is a privilege to be considered for the President-Elect position on the Executive Council of Chi Sigma Iota. CSI has been a part of my own growth as a counselor and counselor educator. I benefited from the mentoring provided as I navigated through my role as a beginning counselor, my emerging professional identity and leadership tendencies, and desire to strive for excellence in the field. It has also been a privilege to pass on what I have learned to upcoming counselors as I have mentored them during their graduate education and beyond.
Develop and Grow Servant Leaders in These Unprecedented Times and Beyond

CSI promotes servant leadership. Servant leaders are focused on the growth of people in their given communities. They help to remove barriers so that people can grow into the best version of themselves. Our world today needs more people serving one another to better their communities. It means looking beyond themselves to see what is best for others around them.

The skills needed for servant leadership integrate well with the counseling field. Being able to put ourselves in the shoes of another to really see the world from their perspective is key in serving others. A servant leader needs to be self-aware, empathic, a good listener, and committed to the professional and personal growth of the people on the team. These beliefs in developing emerging and maturing leaders make CSI one of the forefront societies for students’ professional development.

My leadership style is collaborative and relational. I prefer to encourage the input of the team as decisions are made, with the understanding that we are wanting the best outcome for the people we serve. In the case of CSI, that would be the Chief Executive Officer, CSI staff, CFAs, and chapter members. It means coming alongside the CSI community and working together to advance our mission of leadership growth, advocacy, professionalism, and scholarship.

Increase Our Connections and Mentoring Within and Beyond CSI Membership

These unprecedented times call for new, creative ways to serve and lead. I believe we need to consider how to connect with each other, with other chapters, and with CSI staff to enhance a robust organization that is on the cutting edge of leadership, scholarship, education, and training. CSI holds a major role as a leader to chapters and as a connecting point for engagement among and between chapters.

One of the reasons I love being in counselor education is the aspect of mentoring. We get to work with students and encourage them to become effective, ethical, and compassionate counselors. In CES, we are mentoring students to become educators and researchers that promote excellence in the counseling field. The values of CSI integrate well with the goals of counselor education: mentoring, leadership, professional and personal growth, and advocacy, all done in the spirit of excellence. I would love to see CSI expand their membership among alumni that have dropped CSI after graduation. These potential mentors can infuse the current students with knowledge, excitement, and guidelines on how to be excellent in your chosen career. They can lead the students in ways to advance the values of CSI beyond their graduate training. Through webinars, mentoring, and speaking to chapters, these alumni can be models of servant leaders to the current students. I also would like to see more diversity among our membership. As we realize that there is a need to address systemic racism in our society, it is key to promote leadership among the students representing less visible groups. After all, our CSI students will become the national leaders of CSI and other professional organizations in the future.
Biographical Statement
Dr. Anita Neuer Colburn is a Clinical Associate Professor and CACREP liaison with Counseling@Northwestern, the online site of the M.A. in CMHC program at Northwestern University. Known by her students as “Dr. ANC,” she has been a CSI member since her master’s program at University of Alabama at Birmingham in 1996. Dr. ANC served as President of the Zeta chapter as a master’s student and assisted the Zeta chapter in retaining professional members after she graduated. She served as Wellness Committee Chair and Treasurer for the Omega Delta chapter during her doctoral studies at Old Dominion University, and Chapter Faculty Advisor for the Alpha Omega Lambda (Regent University) chapter as a junior faculty member. She served on the Chapter Faculty Advisor, Lifetime Member, and Professional Leadership and Advocacy committees for CSI International and is currently the Chair of the Task Force for Online & Hybrid Programs. Dr. ANC has been recognized as Outstanding Practitioner from CSI International in 2003, Outstanding Practitioner Supervisor from Omega Delta chapter in 2009, and Outstanding Practitioner Supervisor from CSI International in 2010. In 2019, she joined Dr. Samuel Gladding as an inductee into Zeta’s Counseling Hall of Fame. Anita is a Site Team Chair for CACREP, serves on a number of editorial review boards, and is an active ACES and SACES member. Her research interests include supervision competencies, spiritual integration, and LGBTQ+ advocacy, and she has published 18 articles in peer-reviewed journals and 10 book chapters. Additionally, she has been an invited presenter at state, regional, and national counseling conferences.

Goals Statement
I am truly honored to even be nominated for the position of Treasurer with CSI International.
During my master’s program, CSI was the first professional organization I joined and membership in the Society has been one of the most valued memberships to me over the years because of its emphasis on wellness, servant leadership, and excellence in counseling. As counselors we are called to be passionate advocates and culturally competent, ethical, professional helpers. As counselor educators and supervisors, we are charged with providing mentoring, modeling, and gatekeeping for the future of the profession. I hope that I might contribute to wellness and self-care initiatives for students, supervisors, counselor educators, CFAs, program leaders, and field professionals. Leaders in our profession must continue to protect standards of excellence, in spite of adjusting to a world facing the challenges of a global pandemic. Amidst chaos, confusion, and doubt, it is vitally important that we embrace these responsibilities and advocate for our profession. CSI has benefitted from the efforts of previous and current members of the Executive Council, and I stand on those shoulders. If elected as Treasurer for CSI International I pledge to do all that I can, in conjunction with other members of the Executive Council, to ensure that we are wise stewards of our resources, investing in initiatives that provide both support for chapters and also protect and preserve our Society. I will support CSI in being an integral part of students’ developing professional counselor identity.
For the Position of CSI Treasurer,
Dr. Linwood G. Vereen

Biographical Statement
Linwood G. Vereen is an Associate Professor in the Department of Counseling and College Student Personnel at Shippensburg University of Pennsylvania. Dr. Vereen is currently the CFA of the Upsilon Chapter at Shippensburg University of Pennsylvania and has the privilege of working with a dynamic group of student leaders. He has served as a CFA at another institution and has served on the CSI International Chapter Development Committee with some outstanding CSI leaders. Dr. Vereen is the editor of the Journal of Humanistic Counseling and has scholarly interests in leadership, Black existentialism, group work, and humanistic counseling. He was a recent recipient of the Locke-Paisley Mentoring award from ACES and is a long-standing member of ACA. He has served as president of the Idaho Counseling Association, president of the Association for Humanistic Counseling and has been an ACA Regional Chair.

Goals Statement
I feel privileged to be nominated to serve in the role of Treasurer for Chi Sigma Iota International. Nomination for this role is representative of the commitment that CSI invests in me as a member and in return I commit to uphold the legacy of those who have served CSI before me. This nomination represents for me an extension in the development of my leadership potential. I have worked with many outstanding leaders of Chi Sigma Iota International and look forward to putting into practice all that I have learned. I am currently the CFA for the Upsilon Chapter of CSI at Shippensburg University of Pennsylvania. In this role, I have the honor of working with an outstanding group of student leaders and advocates. If elected I will bring the energy of the Upsilon CSI chapter to my role as Treasurer. I work with a dynamic
group of student leaders and advocates who embody the mission, vision, and legacy of Chi Sigma Iota International. My goals if elected are to diligently and collaboratively serve this association and uphold its values, mission, and vision. If elected treasurer, my work will build on and extend previous roles that I have served in as a member of Chi Sigma Iota International including being a CFA, and member of the Chapter Development Committee. An additional goal will be to support the work of the CSI leadership team in helping this international association serve as a beacon of light, leadership, hope, and action in our current times.
Exemplar Editorial Team

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CSI Webinars
Recorded webinars on a variety of professional topics are available at on the CSI website. Recently added webinars include:

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Dr. Carla Adkison-Johnson

Racism as a Mental Health Challenge: An Antiracist Counseling Perspective
Dr. Courtland C. Lee

Integrated Care: A Coordinated Approach to Healthcare Treatment
Dr. Michael K. Schmit

Telemental Health Counseling: Ethical, Legal, and Practical Considerations
Dr. Nicole A. Stargell
References

McKinney and Runyan References

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**Neuer Colburn References**


**Pellegrino Kohutis and Pool References**


**Wade References**


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Call for Submissions

The CSI Exemplar Editorial Team is accepting submissions for consideration for the Spring 2021 newsletter. This edition will focus on play and creative arts in counseling. Please submit proposals by December 15, 2020 to exemplar@csi-net.org in the form of an APA-style abstract.

Through high-quality research, scholarship, and professional dialogue, JCLA will promote the development of leaders to serve in diverse counseling settings, bring awareness to professional and client advocacy initiatives, and provide a forum for discussing professional issues. JCLA welcomes empirical, theoretical, and conceptual manuscripts focused on leadership, professional and client advocacy, and professional identity for counselors, counseling students, and counselor educators.

Because evidence-based practice is at the heart of the counseling profession, JCLA will occasionally publish exemplary scholarship related to evidence-based practice in counseling practice, supervision, and education. JCLA is published twice a year with a circulation in excess of 15,000. The editorial board accepts research and practice manuscripts on a rolling basis. To learn more about the journal aims, scopes, and author guidelines, please visit tandfonline.com. Our manuscript submission portal is located at http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/ucla. You may also address inquiries to jcla@csi-net.org.
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