

4-1-2016

Evaluation of Service-Learning Infused Courses with Refugee Families

Aida Midgett
Boise State University

Diana M. Dumas
Boise State University

Evaluation of Service-Learning Infused Courses with Refugee Families

Aida Midgett

Boise State University

Diana M. Dumas

Boise State University

Abstract

This study evaluated the impact of service-learning infused courses on multicultural competence and social justice advocacy skills among counseling students. The project, in which students acted as job-coaches for refugee families, was integrated into a first year and second year counseling course. Results indicated an increase in multicultural knowledge and advocacy skills, with greater changes reported among first year students. Implications for counselor training including placement of service-learning projects within the counseling curriculum are discussed.

Keywords: service-learning, multicultural competence, social justice

Counselor education programs must adequately prepare students to work with individuals from diverse backgrounds and engage in action that empowers underserved individuals and communities (American Counseling Association, 2014; CACREP, 2009; Constantine, Hage, Kindaichi, & Bryant, 2007; Jones, Sander, & Booker, 2013; Kiselica & Robinson, 2001). Multicultural competence and social justice advocacy are “separate yet interconnecting” concepts (Ratts, 2011, p. 35). According to Sue & Sue (2013), multicultural competence includes awareness, knowledge, and skills. Awareness refers to counselors’ personal cognizance of cultural conditioning such as biases, stereotypes and values; knowledge encompasses counselor understanding of their own and their clients’ worldview; and skills include acquiring and utilizing appropriate intervention strategies that are effective with clients from diverse backgrounds, including advocacy. Social justice is a complimentary concept that also promotes recognizing the impact of diversity and oppression within the counseling relationship. However, social justice focuses on distributive justice (Crethar, Rivera, & Nash, 2008) and the role of counselor advocacy as a means for changing oppressive systems that negatively impact diverse clients (Ratts, 2011).

Infusing culturally-focused classroom activities into a variety of courses within the curriculum can help counseling students develop multicultural competence (Collins & Pieterse, 2007; Jones et al., 2013; Pieterse, Evans, & Risner-Butner, 2009; Weatherford & Spokane, 2013) and social justice advocacy skills (Jones et al., 2013). Further, students can benefit from programs extending training beyond the classroom experience by providing opportunities for students to engage with culturally and racially diverse individuals in the community (Alexander, Kruczek, & Ponterotto, 2005; Barden & Cashwell, 2013; Tomlinson-Clarke & Clarke, 2010). Community engagement may be a particularly important training experience given that some counselor education graduates report not feeling equipped to work within culturally diverse settings (Arthur & Achenbach, 2002; Cates, Schaeffle, Smaby, Maddux, & LeBeauf, 2007). Furthermore, when evaluating skill development, counseling students rate their multicultural skills lower than their general counseling skills (Cates et al., 2007). Thus, ‘real-world’ experiences are an essential component of training culturally competent counselors (Diaz-Lazaro & Cohen, 2001; Mio, Barker-Hackett, & Tumambing, 2006; Sevig & Etzkorn, 2001).

Cultural immersion programs can help students gain culturally diverse experiences that extend beyond the classroom environment (Marshall & Wieling, 2000). For example, international immersion programs, in which students travel abroad to serve communities, have been shown to deepen cultural self-awareness (Platt, 2012), change students’ pre-existing biases and stereotypes, dispel myths and help students contextualize experience in personal meaning (Tomlinson-Clarke, & Clarke, 2010), and help students develop overall multicultural competence (West-Olatunji, Goodman, Mehta, & Templeton, 2011).

Although research indicates international programs have a positive impact on the development of multicultural competence, these programs may not be available to all students due to a variety of factors including financial costs, work, and family responsibilities. In contrast, multicultural immersion programs are conducted locally and provide an easily accessible multicultural experience. Research suggests that working within a community different from one's own culture increases student multicultural awareness, knowledge, and confidence (Hipolito-Delgado et al., 2011). Multicultural immersion is also associated with deepened cultural identity, cultural knowledge, and counseling skills (DeRicco & Sciarra, 2005).

Service-learning is another form of experiential education that engages students in addressing community needs while integrating knowledge that is concurrently being acquired in the traditional classroom setting (Jacoby, 1986). The key elements of service-learning include (a) purpose (Furco, 1996), (b) structure (Furco, 1996), (c) partnership (Jacoby, 2003), and (d) reflection (Ash & Clayton, 2009). The purpose of service-learning is to increase students' civic engagement and sense of social responsibility, while the structure is integrating a project or experience within a course (Furco, 1996). The third element of service-learning is partnership between the university and the community (e.g., a nonprofit organization) working together to address a community-defined need, often focused on under-served populations (Jacoby, 2003). Finally, student reflection aims to integrate the service activity with course content, personal growth, and civic engagement (Ash & Clayton, 2009). Reflection differentiates service-learning from community service, as it aims to reinforce learning. Addressing a community-defined need differentiates service-learning from counseling-related practicum or internship experiences, which focus on students' professional development (Furco, 1996). Similar to multicultural immersion programs, service-learning projects expose counseling students to systemic issues, encourage engagement in social justice roles and advocacy, and increase awareness of social influences that affect clients (Kenny & Gallagher, 2000; Murray, Pope, & Rowell, 2010). Furthermore, service-learning projects can be assigned as part of required courses, providing all students with an opportunity to engage with racially and culturally diverse individuals.

Findings from research evaluating service-learning projects are mixed. For example, findings of one study indicated facilitating groups at a low-income, diverse, metropolitan middle school was associated with increased affective, cognitive, and behavioral growth. Although self-reported multicultural competence increased for some students but remained the same or decreased for others (Lee, Rosen, & McWhirter, 2014). Other researchers have found that engaging in a multicultural service-learning project prior to the practicum experience increased students' multicultural sensitivity and provided an opportunity for them to learn more about the community (Burnett, Hamel, & Long 2004). Community-based service-learning projects designed to increase social advocacy skills are also effective in increasing students' advocacy skills, perceptions of the value of advocacy, and knowledge of public policy and politics (Murray et al., 2010). The authors, however, suggested a need for further studies that provide students with a framework for advocacy and knowledge of advocacy competencies.

Overall, the literature indicates multicultural immersion and service-learning projects help counseling students develop multicultural competence and social justice advocacy skills. Several gaps in the literature, however, remain. First, we could only find one study examining the impact of service-learning on social advocacy skills. Additionally, there is no research guiding the optimal timing for introducing multicultural service-learning activities into the curriculum. Thus, the aim of the current study is to extend the literature by investigating both the effectiveness and timing of counseling courses that include a community-based, multicultural service-learning project on multicultural competence and social justice advocacy skills.

To address this aim, we implemented a service-learning project in which counseling students assisted refugee families in the local community. Changes in multicultural competence and social advocacy skills were examined at the outset and after students completed the service-learning infused courses. Additionally, to determine the most optimal timing for implementing a multicultural service-learning infused course within the counseling curriculum, we examined differences in the effectiveness of the service-learning infused course when implemented in the first semester of the program relative to the second year of the program. We evaluated the following research questions: (1) is the inclusion of a multicultural service-learning infused course in the counseling curriculum effective in increasing multicultural competency and social advocacy skills in counseling students? and (2) what is the optimal time to implement a multicultural service-learning course in the counseling curriculum?

Method

Participants

The sample consisted of 38 (81.5% female) counselor education Master's students enrolled in a full-time Council for Accreditation for Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) accredited counselor education program at a midsized metropolitan university. Of these students, 20 completed Foundations in Counseling offered during the first semester in the program, and 18 were enrolled in Career Counseling offered during their second semester of the second year of the program. Both courses included a service-learning project. Participants ranged in age from 21 to 61 ($M = 32.74$, $SD = 8.40$) and primarily self-identified as White (92.2%), with 2.6% Hispanic, 2.6% Asian-Japanese, and 2.6% Native American. The Asian-Japanese student immigrated from Japan and was the only internationally-born student in the sample. Sample characteristics by year in program are shown in Table 1. An independent sample t-test and chi square analyses indicated no differences between the students in the Foundations course and Career course in age, gender, or ethnicity.

Instruments

Multicultural Competence. Multicultural competence was assessed using the Multicultural Counseling Knowledge and Awareness Scale (MCKAS; Ponterotto & Potere, 2003). The MCKAS consists of two scales: Knowledge and Awareness. The Knowledge scale measures knowledge of multicultural issues and is comprised of 20 items. The Awareness scale measures awareness of multicultural issues and is comprised of 12 items. Examples of knowledge items are "I check up on my minority/cultural counseling skills by monitoring my functioning- via consultation, supervision, and continuing education" and "I am aware some research indicates that minority clients receive 'less preferred' forms of counseling treatment than majority clients." Examples of awareness items include: "I believe all clients should maintain direct eye contact during counseling" and "I think that clients who do not discuss intimate aspects of their lives are being resistant and defensive." Items are rated on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 (*not at all true*) to 7 (*totally true*). After reversed scoring, items are summed for each scale.

The MCKAS is one of the most commonly used instruments to assess multicultural competence (Dunn, Smith, & Montoya, 2006) and is recommended, among other surveys, as a classroom tool as a pre-post measure to determine growth in cultural awareness (Jones et al., 2013). The MCKAS has demonstrated exploratory and confirmatory factor validity (Ponterotto & Potere, 2003), as well as established content, construct, and criterion-related validity (Constantine, 2002; Jones et al., 2013; O'Brien et al., 1997; Ponterotto, Gretchen, Utsey, Rieger, & Austin, 2002). Reported coefficient alphas for the Knowledge Scale are high, ranging from $\alpha = .85 - .95$, and moderate for the Awareness Scale, ranging from $\alpha = .75 - .85$ (Chao, 2013; Neville, Spanierman, & Doan, 2006; Ponterotto et al., 2002). For the current sample, internal consistency for the Knowledge Scale was Cronbach's $\alpha = .92$ and for the Awareness scale, Cronbach's $\alpha = .95$.

Social Justice Advocacy Skills. Social Justice Advocacy Skills were assessed using the Advocacy Competencies Self-Assessment Survey (ACSA; Ratts & Ford, 2010). This scale measures the levels of advocacy competencies established as guiding principles for counselors by an American Counseling Association (ACA) Task Force (Lewis, Arnold, House, & Toporek, 2003). The ACSA consists of 30 statements across six domains and assesses counselor strength as a social change agent. Examples of questions within each domain include: "It is difficult for me to identify clients' strengths and resources" (Client/Student Empowerment), "I alert community of school groups with concerns that I become aware of through my work with clients/students" (Community Collaboration), "I assess the influence of my efforts to awaken the general public about oppressive barriers that impact clients/students" (Public Information), "I am able to identify allies who can help confront barriers that impact client/student development" (Client/Student Advocacy), "I am able to recognize and deal with resistance when involved with systems advocacy" (Systems Advocacy), and, "I lobby legislators and policymakers to create social change" (Social/Political Advocacy). Items are rated on a 3-point scale ranging from *almost always* to *almost never*. After reversed scoring, items are summed for each domain scale. Domain scales are summed for a Total Advocacy Rating Scale. The ACSA has a reported coefficient alpha of .93 but the domain scale structures were not confirmed through factor analysis (Bvunzawabaya, 2012). Therefore, only the Total Advocacy Rating was used in the current study. For the current sample, internal consistency for the Total Scale was Cronbach's $\alpha = .94$.

Procedures

A service-learning project was conducted in a first year Foundations of Counseling course and a second year Career Counseling course. The Foundations course was selected because the project was a good fit for the course goal of providing an orientation to core counseling areas including multicultural counseling. The Career course was selected because the focus of the project was for the students to be job-coaches for the families. The same instructor taught both the Foundations and Career Counseling courses. The study was reviewed and approved by the institutional review board at the university where the study was conducted. Students were assured that participation in the research study (i.e., completing the demographic and pre- and post-surveys) was voluntary and declining participation would not affect their grade in any way. On the other hand, participation in the service-learning project and the associated assignments were required. However, students were informed that an alternative service-learning project could be arranged if preferred.

The consent process was initiated the first day of instruction prior to any activity related to the project. A graduate assistant reviewed the informed consent document with students without the instructor present in the room. The informed consent document included (a) purpose and background of the study, (b) procedures, (c) potential risks such as including the possible loss of privacy, discomforts and benefits, (d) the lack of costs and payments, and (e) contact information of the researcher and IRB board. After reviewing the informed consent with students, if they agreed to participate the graduate assistant asked students to begin filling out surveys. In order to protect their identity, the University's review board requested that students not sign the informed consent form. Additional precautions were also taken to maintain students' confidentiality. Because the study required multiple-time point data collection, students were asked to use an identification number that could be traced to their identity. However, after data collection was completed, all identifying information was destroyed. Students completed baseline surveys the first week of instruction in both the Foundations and Career Counseling courses. A graduate assistant collected the post-survey data on the last day of instruction without the instructor present. The second author evaluated the study's outcomes and was not involved with course instruction or the service-learning project. The second author was selected as the independent evaluator due to her expertise in program evaluation demonstrated through published research and grant funding. Adding an external evaluator increased the overall rigor of the study by helping to develop a research methodology and data analysis plan from an objective perspective.

The service-learning project was also introduced to students during the first day of class through an Orientation provided by the partnering agency. Students selected a partner within the course and the agency liaison matched them with a refugee family who they worked with throughout the semester. The instructor monitored student work through journal reflections, online reflections and discussion questions, check-ins and in-depth discussions during class, and occasional individual meetings and email communication. The instructor also provided students with a framework for advocacy based on several models including the advocacy model adopted by ACA (Lewis, Arnold, House, & Toporek, 2003). Students were taught the individual, school, community, and public levels of advocacy endorsed by ACA. Additionally, all students were required to submit a group poster presentation to the university's service-learning exhibition.

Although there were no major differences on how the project was monitored or processed by the instructor in both courses, review of the instructions for the poster presentation indicated that they were more clearly articulated to describe the advocacy process among the first year students in the Foundations course. Additionally, in the Foundations course, students conducted a case study listing activities in the three levels, as appropriate in response to a social justice problem. In the Career course, students were only asked to list activities without identifying the three levels of advocacy. However, assignments related to the service-learning project were equivalent for both courses. Further, the instructor attempted to control for content differences between both courses by making multicultural competence and social justice advocacy activities unrelated to the service-learning project equivalent in both courses. Table 2 shows an analytic course map that includes (a) course multicultural and advocacy goals, (b) required service-learning activities, (c) other course activities, and (d) corresponding multicultural and social justice advocacy competencies. As seen in Table 2, students in both courses were also required to complete multicultural and social justice advocacy assignments that were not directly related to service-learning project.

Service-Learning Project

The instructor partnered with a federally funded, resettlement agency that promotes social and economic self-sufficiency for refugees in the local community. The agency provided an orientation to the students enrolled in the course covering topics such as the general refugee experience prior to reaching the host country, adaptation to the receiving community, and social justice challenges. Upon completion, students were paired based on schedule availability, and assigned a refugee family to work with throughout the semester. Prior to meeting with the family, students were assigned relevant readings, examined their assumptions and expectations, and developed a plan to guide their first meeting. Refugee families came from a variety of countries including Iraq, Congo, Afghanistan, Bhutan, and Uzbekistan. Most refugees in the state are women and children and their level of education ranges from having never attended school to doctoral and other terminal degrees (Idaho Office for Refugees, 2015). The family members' level of English language proficiency also varied from almost none to close to fluency. Interpreters were available for the first meeting.

Additionally, the partnering agency informed the refugee families about the nature of the work with the counseling students. More specifically, the refugee families were informed that students from a local university were assigned to work with them as part of a course project. Furthermore, the agency conveyed that the helping relationship was temporary and that the students had restrictions regarding their availability. Finally, refugee families were informed that the goal of the relationship was to help them in the process of obtaining employment.

The instructor set the curriculum for the course. At times, however, the instructor worked with the students to develop specific activities in response to refugee families' individual needs. Students were assigned to be job-coaches and instructed to (a) use their basic counseling skills to build rapport with family members, (b) assess the family's needs, and (c) use creative approaches to assist family members in obtaining, or getting closer to obtaining employment. Students were assigned to spend a minimum of 30 hours working on this project. Common job coaching activities included: looking for job openings along with family members in newspapers and online, building English language skills by practicing greetings and role-playing job-related scenarios (e.g., asking for a job application and practicing job interviewing skills), exploring work history and helping family members translate their skills and educational background to those required by potential employers in the United States (U.S.), sharing personal experiences and often unspoken cultural expectations regarding the workplace and career advancement in the U.S., and helping connect families to community resources.

To develop rapport and create a helpful relationship with their refugee family, students engaged in less traditional counseling activities such as eating meals or drinking tea prepared by their refugee family; riding public transportation to the grocery store, park, and/or public library; and engaging in macro-level advocacy to increase public awareness and address unmet needs of refugee families in our local community. In terms of class assignments specific to the service-learning project, students completed an hourly log, participated in online discussion boards, and completed a journal reflection after each meeting with the family.

Results

Three mixed model analyses of variance (ANOVAs) were conducted to examine differences in baseline and follow-up scores within and between student groups for multicultural awareness, multicultural knowledge, and social justice advocacy skills. The within subjects variable was Time (baseline; follow-up) and the between subjects variable was Group (First Year; Second Year). We conducted a power calculation to determine if the current sample would be sufficient to detect a small to medium effect size for the F-test for the 2-way interaction of Time x Group. Power calculations indicated the current sample size should yield power of 0.90 to detect a medium effect size, Cohen's $d = .5 - .6$ or eta squared of 6%, and power of 0.50 to detect a small effect size, Cohen's $d = .1 - .2$ or eta squared of 2%, for the contrasts of interest.

Means and standard deviation for each of the dependent variables by year at baseline and follow-up assessments are shown in Table 3. Results of the mixed model ANOVAs indicated a significant main effect for Time, Wilks' Lambda = .49, $F(1, 36) = 37.45$, $p = .001$, $\eta^2_p = .51$, and a significant interaction effect for Time x Group, Wilks' Lambda = .90, $F(1, 36) = 4.11$, $p = .05$, $\eta^2_p = .10$, for multicultural knowledge. Similarly, for social justice advocacy skills, the main effect for Time was significant, Wilks' Lambda = .38, $F(1, 36) = 58.70$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2_p = .62$, and the interaction effect for Time x Group was significant, Wilks' Lambda = .88, $F(1, 36) = 4.77$, $p < .04$, $\eta^2_p = .12$. Examination of the

interaction effect indicated a larger increase in multicultural knowledge and social advocacy skills among first year students relative to second year students. In contrast, results indicated no significant main effect for Time, Wilks' Lambda = .94, $F(1, 36) = 2.39$, $p = .13$, $\eta^2_p = .06$, or interaction effect for Time x Group, Wilks' Lambda = .99, $F(1, 36) = 0.31$, $p = .58$, $\eta^2_p = .01$, for multicultural awareness.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to extend the literature by investigating the impact of two courses infused with an innovative service-learning project conducted with refugee families on students' multicultural competence and social justice advocacy skills. The study also examined the optimal timing for implementing a course infused with a multicultural service-learning activity within the counseling curriculum. Specifically, differences in changes in multicultural competence and social justice advocacy skills were examined between first and second year students.

Overall, results supported providing service-learning infused courses as an effective teaching strategy. Both first and second year students reported an increase in multicultural knowledge and social justice advocacy skills after participating in the courses infused with a service-learning project. That is, regardless of whether students had received previous didactic instruction in a multicultural counseling course, students perceived they were more knowledgeable about multicultural issues, as well as more skilled in social justice advocacy after engaging in the courses that contained a service-learning experience. These results are consistent with previous research indicating service-learning is an effective teaching strategy for preparing students to work with diverse clients (Burnett et al., 2004; Lee et al., 2014) and develop social justice advocacy skills (Murray et al., 2010).

In contrast, there were no significant changes in multicultural awareness. This finding is also consistent with prior research indicating that when multicultural coursework include a cross-cultural component, multicultural knowledge and skills increase, but awareness does not (Diaz-Lazaro & Cohen, 2001). One explanation for lack of an observed change is that awareness is more difficult to change than knowledge (Chao, Wei, Good, & Flores, 2011; Jones et al., 2013). Moreover, Jones et al. (2013) suggests that developing multicultural awareness may be a longer-term process than changing knowledge and skills, especially early in one's professional development. Becoming attuned to oneself may be more anxiety provoking and create more defensiveness in counseling students than looking at external factors that are required to increase knowledge (Jones et al., 2013).

Findings also indicate that although students in both courses reported a significant increase in multicultural knowledge and social justice advocacy, these increases were significantly greater for first year students relative to second year students. One explanation for this finding is that first year students who had not taken a multicultural course yet had lower levels of baseline multicultural knowledge and social advocacy skills relative to the second year students. Therefore, they made greater gains through a course that included a multicultural service-learning project. However, second year students still benefited from the experience, supporting research suggesting that service-learning activities enable students to use concepts previously learned in coursework (Burnett et al., 2004). Furthermore, it is interesting to consider that the Foundations of Counseling course took place during the time when students were beginning to develop their counseling orientation. Thus, introducing this service-learning infused course early in the program, may also lead to a greater increase in knowledge and social justice advocacy skills (Bemak, Chi-Ying Chung, Talleyrand, Jones et al., & Daquin, 2011) and help students integrate diversity and action into their definition of what it means to be a professional counselor.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

While this study contributes to our understanding of service-learning as an innovative teaching strategy for training counselors, certain limitations should be considered. First, students were from a predominantly White Northwest university, thus limiting the generalizability of the results. Additionally, the sample size was relatively small, thus further limiting the generalizability of our findings. Therefore, it is important for future research to be conducted with a larger and more diverse sample. Next, information was obtained through self-report, potentially leading to biased or distorted reporting. Self-report, however, is a common practice in counseling research and provides useful information in making empirically based decisions regarding curriculum and implementation of innovative strategies for teaching counselors.

Another important limitation concerns the lack of control group in this study in which students took an equivalent course taught without the service-learning component. Multicultural issues and social justice advocacy were discussed in both courses and these discussions may alone have contributed to the changes in outcome variables. Without a control group, it is unclear if it was the service-learning project or other factors that affected study outcomes. Additionally, findings indicated a greater increase in multicultural knowledge and social justice advocacy skills among first year students compared to second year students. It is possible that cohort effects, including course content or other external factors specific to that cohort, rather than the timing of the service-learning project impacted the study outcomes. For example, first year students completed an advocacy case study addressing the three levels of social justice advocacy. Additionally, students completed the activity face-to-face, and it resulted in a lively and comprehensive discussion. In contrast, second year students only listed advocacy activities without identifying three separate levels. Further, the activity was completed on-line, which in this case lacked the same level of depth as the face-to-face discussion. These differences may have contributed to the increase in social justice advocacy skills reported by first year students relative to second year students. Further, although there were no major differences on how the project was monitored or processed by the instructor in both courses, instructions for a presentation were more clearly articulated to describe the advocacy process in the Foundations course. It is possible that this may have “primed” students in the Foundations course and contributed to the increase in social advocacy skills relative to second year students. Thus, future directions for research can include the addition of a control group to strengthen the study methodology by increasing the internal validity of the study.

Although the findings of this study indicate an increase in students’ multicultural knowledge and social justice advocacy skills, the focus of the service-learning project was on students working with refugee families. Thus, it would be beneficial for future studies to focus on other aspects of diversity. Despite ethical and accreditation requirements, multicultural and social justice counselor preparation is often limited to only one course within the curriculum. Given the need to cover a broad range of topics and many population groups, this can lead to a diluted curriculum (Priester, Jones, Jackson-Bailey, Jana-Masri, Jordan, & Metz, 2008), lacking the training required for students to work with a broad range of clients. For example, a single multicultural counseling course has been shown insufficient in increasing students’ awareness, knowledge, and skills specific to lesbian, gay, and bisexual populations (Bidell, 2014). Thus, it would be beneficial for future research to explore multicultural competence and social justice advocacy skills in a similar model assessing counseling students’ competence with other populations, including lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered, and queer individuals.

Implications for Training Counselors

This study provides a model for infusing an applied cross-cultural experience within the local community into required courses, making it accessible to all students enrolled. Counselor educators can build on this study to develop similar projects addressing issues pertinent to their local community to help prepare students in the areas of multicultural competence and social justice advocacy skills. This study also provides empirical data to support curriculum placement decisions, addressing an identified gap in the counselor education literature (Granzello & Hazller, 1998). Students who have already taken a multicultural counseling course may benefit from curricular experiences that include cultural immersion. However, results of this study indicate that students do not need to have received didactic instruction in cultural awareness to benefit from this type of service-learning program. In fact, students may benefit more when the program is offered early in the curriculum.

There are also some challenges that need to be anticipated when conducting courses infused with a service-learning project. First, for the project to be successful the instructor needs to develop a good working relationship with the agency and be in regular contact. Next, guidelines and expectation need to be clearly laid out in the syllabus; however, given the nature of this experience, instructors must be willing to be flexible and open to unexpected circumstances. Additionally, instructors need to be prepared for unexpected factors that may emerge that are outside of the instructor’s or students’ control. In addition, differences in worldview and values between students and refugee families can result in ethical dilemmas that need to be worked through. For example, some refugee families are more comfortable with their young elementary school aged children walking to school unattended relative to many U.S. families. Students could perceive this as neglect, prompting questions related to involving child protective services. With instructor support, students can be guided through an ethical decision-making process. These issues described can be time consuming and counselor educators must be willing to invest the extra time needed to make courses infused with a service-learning project successful. Ultimately these unexpected circumstances often become invaluable learning experiences.

References

- Alexander, C. M., Kruczek, T., & Ponterotto, J. G. (2005). Building multicultural competencies in school counselor trainees: An international immersion experience. *Counselor Education and Supervision, 44*, p.255-266.
- American Counseling Association. (2014). Retrieved from <http://www.counseling.org/knowledge-center/ethics>
- Arthur, N., & Achenbach, K. (2002). Developing multicultural counseling competencies through experiential learning. *Counselor Education & Supervision, 42*, 2-14.
- Ash, S.L., & Clayton, P.H. (2009). Generating, deepening, and documenting learning: The power of critical reflection in applied learning. *Journal of Applied Learning in Higher Education, 1*, 25-48.
- Barden, S. M., & Cashwell, C. S. (2013). Critical factors in cultural immersion: A synthesis of relevant literature. *International Journal of Advanced Counseling, 35*, 286-297.
- Bemak, F., Chi-Ying Chung, R., Talleyrand, R. M., Jones, H., & Daquin, J. (2011). Implementing multicultural social justice strategies in counselor education training programs. *Journal for Social Action in Counseling and Psychology, 3*, 29-43.
- Bidell, M. P. (2014). Are Multicultural Courses Addressing Disparities? Exploring Multicultural and Affirmative Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Competencies of Counseling and Psychology Students. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development, 42*, 132-146.
- Burnett, J. A., Hamel, D., & Long, L. L. (2004). Service learning in graduate counselor education: Developing multicultural counseling competency. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development, 32*, 180-191.
- Burns, L. T. (1998). Make sure it's service learning, not just community service. *Education Digest, 64*, 38-41.
- Bvunzawabaya, B. (2012). Social justice counseling: Establishing psychometric properties for the Advocacy Competencies Self-Assessment Survey© (Unpublished dissertation). Auburn University, Auburn, Alabama.
- CACREP Standards (2009). Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs.
- Cates, J. T., Schaeffle, S. E., Smaby, M. H., Maddux, C. D., & LeBeauf, I. (2007). Comparing multicultural with general counseling knowledge and skill competency for students who completed counselor training. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development, 35*, 26-39.
- Collins, N. M., & Pieterse, A. L. (2007). Critical incident analysis based training: An approach for developing active racial/cultural awareness. *Journal of Counseling & Development, 85*, 14-23.
- Chao, R. C. (2013). Race/Ethnicity and multicultural competence among school counselors: Multicultural training, Racial/Ethnic identity, and color-blind racial attitudes. *Journal of Counseling and Development, 91*, 140-151. Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/1330852059?accountid=9649>
- Chao, R. C., Wei, M., Good, G. E., & Flores, L.Y. (2011). Race/ethnicity, colorblind racial attitudes, and multicultural competence: The moderating effects of multicultural counseling training. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 35*, 268-274. doi: 10.1037/a0022091
- Constantine, M. G. (2002). Racism attitudes, White racial identity attitudes, and multicultural counseling competence in school counselor trainees. *Counselor Education and Supervision, 41*, 162-174.
- Constantine, M. G., Hage, S. M., Kindaichi, M. M., & Bryant, R. M. (2007). Social justice and multicultural issues: Implications for the practice and training of counselors and counseling psychologists. *Journal of Counseling & Development, 85*, 24-29.
- Crethar, H. C., Rivera, E. T., & Nash, S. (2008). In Search of Common Threads: Linking Multicultural, Feminist, and Social Justice Counseling Paradigms. *Journal of Counseling & Development, 86*, 269-278.
- DeRicco, J. N., & Sciarra, D. T. (2005). The immersion experience in multicultural counselor training: Confronting covert racism. *Multicultural Counseling and Development, 33*, 2-16
- Diaz-Lazaro, C. M., & Cohen, B. (2001). Cross-cultural contact in counseling training. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development, 29*, 41-56.
- Dunn, T. W., Smith, T. B., & Montoya, J. A. (2006). Multicultural competency instrumentation: A review and analysis of reliability generalization. *Journal of Counseling and Development, 84*, 471-482. Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/218960334?accountid=9649>
- Furco, A (1996). *Service-learning: A balanced approach to experiential education. Expanding Boundaries: Service and Learning*. Washington DC: Corporation for National Service, 2-6.
- Granzello, D. H., Hazler, R. J. (1998). A developmental rationale for curriculum order and teaching styles in counselor education programs. *Counselor Education and Supervision, 38*, 89-105.

- Hipoglitto-Delgado, C., Cook, J.C., Avrus, E.M., Bonham, E.J. (2011). Developing Counseling Students' Multicultural Competence Through the Multicultural Action Project. *Counselor Education and Supervision, 50*, 402-421. doi: 10.1002/j.1556-6978.2011.tb01924.x
- Idaho Office for Refugees (2015). *Refugees 101*. Retrieved from www.idahorefugees.org/refugees_in_idaho/#idaho_refugee_arrivals.
- Jacoby, B. (1996). Service-learning in today's higher education. In B. Jacoby (Ed.). *Service-Learning in Higher Education*. (pp. 3-25). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Jacoby, B. (2003). Fundamentals of service-learning partnerships. In B. Jacoby and Associates (Eds.), *Building partnerships for service-learning* (pp. 1-19). San Francisco: Jossey Bass.
- Jones, J. M., Sander, J.B., & Booker, K.W. (2013). Multicultural competency building: Practical solutions for training and evaluating student progress. *Training and Education in Professional Psychology 7*, 12-22.
- Kenny, M. E., & Gallagher, L. A. (2000). Service-learning as a vehicle in training psychologists for revised professional roles. In F. T. Sherman, W. R. Torbert (Eds.), *Transforming social inquiry, transforming social action: New paradigms for crossing the theory/practice divide in universities and communities* (pp. 189-204). New York, NY: Kluwer Academic/Plenum Publishers.
- Kiselica, M. S., & Robinson, M. (2001). Bringing advocacy counseling to life: The history, issues, and human dramas of social justice work in counseling. *Journal of Counseling & Development, 79*, 387-397.
- Lee, D. L., Rosen, A. D., & McWhirter, J. J. (2014). Assessing changes in counselor trainees' multicultural competence related to service learning. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development, 42*, 31-41.
- Lewis, J., Arnold, M.S., House, R., & Toporek, R. (2003). Advocacy competences: American Counseling Association Task Force on Advocacy Competencies. Retrieved from <http://www.counseling.org/knowledge-center/competencies>
- Marshall, J. P., & Wieling, E. (2000). Promoting MFT diversity through "cultural plunges." *Family Therapy, 27*, 89-99.
- Mio, J. S., Barker-Hackett, L., & Tumabling, J. (2006). *Multicultural psychology: Understanding our diverse communities*. Boston, MA: McGraw-Hill.
- Murray, C. E., Pope, A. L., & Rowell, P. C. (2010). Promoting counseling students' advocacy competencies through service-learning. *Journal for Social Action in Counseling and Psychology, 2*, 29-47.
- Neville, H., Spanierman, L., & Doan, B. (2006). Exploring the association between color-blind racial ideology and multicultural counseling competencies. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology, 12*, 275-290.
- O'Brien, K. M., Heppner, M. J., Flores, L. Y., & Bikos, L. H. (1997). The Career Counseling Self-Efficiency Scale: Instrument development and training applications. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 44*, 20-31.
- Pieterse, A. L., Evans, S. A., & Risner-Butner, A. (2009). Multicultural competence and social justice training in counseling psychology and counselor education: A review and analysis of a sample of multicultural course syllabi. *The Counseling Psychologist, 37*, 93-115.
- Priester, P. E., Jones, J. E., Jackson-Bailey, C. M., Jana-Masri, A., Jordan, E. X., & Metz, A. J. (2008). An analysis of content and instructional strategies in multicultural counseling courses. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development, 36*, 29-39. doi:10.1002/j.2161-1912.2008.tb00067.x
- Platt, J. J. (2012). A Mexico-city based immersion education program: Training mental health clinicians for practice with Latino communities. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy, 38*, 352-364.
- Ponterotto, J. G., Gretchen, D., Utsey, S. O., Rieger, B. P., & Austin, R. (2002). A revision of the multicultural counseling awareness scale. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development, 30*, 153-180.
- Ponterotto, J. G., & Potere, J. C. (2003). The Multicultural Counseling Knowledge and Awareness Scale (MCKAS): Validity, reliability, and user guidelines. In D. B. Pope-Davis, H. K. Coleman, W. Liu, R. L. Toporek (Eds.), *Handbook of multicultural competencies: In counseling & psychology* (pp. 137-153). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Ratts, M. J. (2011). Multiculturalism and Social Justice: Two Sides of the Same Coin. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development, 39*, 24-37.
- Ratts, M. J., & Ford, A. (2012). Advocacy Competencies Self-Assessment Survey: A tool for measuring advocacy competence. In Ratts, M. J., Toporek, R. L., & Lewis, J. A. (Ed.s), *ACA advocacy competencies: A social justice framework for counselors* (pp. 21-26). Alexandria, VA: American Counseling Association.
- Sevig, T., & Etzkorn, J. (2001). Transformative training: A year-long multicultural counseling seminar for graduate students. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development, 29*, 57-72.
- Sue, D. W., & Sue, D. (2013). *Counseling the culturally diverse: Theory and practice (5th ed.)*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

- Tomlinson-Clarke, S. M., & Clarke, D. (2010). Culturally focused community-centered service learning: An international cultural immersion experience. *Multicultural Counseling and Development, 38*, 166-175.
- Weatherford, R. D., & Spokane, A. R. (2013). The relationship between personality dispositions, multicultural exposure, and multicultural case conceptualization ability. *Training and Education in Professional Psychology, 7*, 215-224.
- West-Olatunji, C., Goodman, R. D., Mehta, S., and Templeton, L. (2011). Creating cultural competence: An outreach immersion experience in southern Africa. *International Journal of Advanced Counseling, 33*, 335-346.

Table 1
Sample Characteristics by Year in Program

	First Year Students (n = 20)	Second Year Students (n = 18)
Sex		
Male	15%	22%
Female	85%	78%
Ethnicity		
White	95%	89%
Hispanic	0%	5.5%
Asian-Japanese	5%	0%
Native American	0%	5.5%
Age	32.40 (10.14)	33.11 (6.30)

Table 2

Analytic Course Map

Multicultural and Advocacy Goals	Service-Learning Project Activities	Other Course Activities Foundations Course	Other Course Activities Career Course	Core Competencies
1. Increase students' awareness of biases, stereotypes, and values, and how own cultural conditioning impacts worldview	Spending Time with Family Reflective Journal Online Discussion Board	"Let Your Life Speak" Book Report and Class Discussion	Online Discussion based on Relevant Textbook Chapters	Multicultural Awareness
2. Increase students' understanding of refugee families' experience and worldview	Interview of Family Meals/Accompanying Family on Routine Errands/Activities	Assigned Readings	Assigned Readings	Multicultural Knowledge
3. Increase students' understanding of how sociopolitical forces in local community impact refugee families	Interview of Family Meals/Accompanying Family on Routine Errands/Activities Face-to-Face and Online Discussions	None	None	Multicultural Knowledge
4. Develop social justice advocacy skills	Job Coaching Developing Poster Presentation Based on Work with Family (more clearly articulated in Foundations Course)	Assigned Readings In Class Exercise (Case Study)	Assigned Readings Online Discussion (Case Study)	Social Justice Advocacy

Table 3

Mean Scores for Multicultural Awareness, Multicultural Knowledge, and Advocacy Skills

	First Year Students		Second Year Students		All Students	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
<i>Awareness^a</i>						
Baseline	31.70	4.39	74.56	7.86	52.00	22.55
Follow-up	34.40	11.01	75.83	8.23	54.02	23.09
<i>Knowledge^b</i>						
Baseline	81.00	18.14	104.56	14.59	92.21	20.19
Follow-up	103.55	16.34	115.83	8.78	109.37	109.37
<i>Advocacy^c</i>						
Baseline	42.25	18.71	60.78	17.53	51.03	20.21
Follow-up	77.00	20.24	80.11	21.49	78.47	20.61

^aThe possible range for scores for the Awareness subscale is 1 – 84.

^bThe possible range for scores for the Knowledge subscale is 1 – 140.

^cThe possible range for scores for the Total Advocacy scale is 1 – 90.