AN ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION OF

Christina Rogers for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Counseling presented on September 29, 2023.

Title: Developing Professional School Counselor Self-Efficacy and Competence to Broach Career Conversations in K-12 Through an Online Professional Development Training.

Abstract approved: _____

Kok-Mun Ng

Professional school counselors are tasked with providing effective and relevant career counseling and career-focused activities with all K–12 students; however, the career domain remains the area where school counselors feel least efficacious and competent to broach as part of their role. Addressing the career domain in schools is vital as it ensures all students have an opportunity to develop the mindsets and behaviors necessary to acquire work-related skills, resilience, perseverance, a desire for lifelong learning, and a positive attitude towards academics, which contribute to a strong work ethic. Additionally, the world of work has changed significantly and is continuing to change because of technology, artificial intelligence, and changing social needs. Approaching the career domain with theories, assessments, and techniques focused on occupational exploration and decision-making no longer creates career-ready students. Further training for school counselors in broaching the career domain, both in counselor education programs and professional development offerings, is patchy and difficult to access due to financial and time constraints. The purpose of the two quasi-experimental studies in this dissertation is to investigate the effectiveness of an online asynchronous training program designed to help increase school counselor self-efficacy and competency in broaching career

conversations in K–12 schools, as well as connecting the conversations to ASCA, NCDA, and CASEL standards and identifying diversity, equity, and inclusive (DEI) considerations within the approach. The 9-hour online asynchronous training titled *Career Conversations in K–12: Demystifying the School Counselor Role,* focuses on the intrapersonal domain of career problem conceptualization developed by Dr. Louis A. Busacca (2002) and covers appropriate career theories and interventions.

For both studies, a national sample of school counselor participants ($N = 38$) serving students at all educational levels completed the 9-hour online training. Study 1 data were collected using pretest and posttest self-efficacy scales utilizing modified sub-scales from the School Counselor Self-Efficacy Scale (SCSES; Bodenhorn & Skaggs, 2005), the Career Counselor Self-Efficacy Scale (CCSES; O' Brien et al., 1997). Study 2 data were collected from the same sample using a case study response to assess competency. Case study responses were rated by two doctoral-level school counselor educators utilizing a rubric for the three categories. For the first study that examined self-efficacy, a paired sample *t*-test was performed to compare participant pre- and posttest scores for each of the modified self-efficacy scales and for overall self-efficacy. The second study examined competency in broaching career conversations, connecting ASCA, NCDA, and CASEL standards to the career conversations, and DEI considerations. Rating data in the first competency category was analyzed using a paired sample *t*-test. Competency in the second and third categories was analyzed using a McNemar x^2 test.

Overall, results from both studies showed that school counselors in the study benefited from the online asynchronous professional development training in the career domain. The first study indicated there was a statistically significant increase in participant self-efficacy as a result of the training, with an overall self-efficacy mean difference of 0.91. The Multicultural

Competency Skills sub-scale displayed the highest mean difference increase of 1.17. Based on these results, asynchronous online training in the career domain may serve as an alternative to in-person instruction to increase school counselor self-efficacy. The second study's results indicated significant effects in two categories: (a) broaching career conversations and (b) connecting the conversations to standards. No effect occurred in the DEI category.

In combination, results from both studies add to a space where research is scant. Both studies appear to be the first to investigate the effectiveness of an asynchronous training module that is designed to help increase school counselors' efficacy and competence in completing tasks in a major domain of their work. There are implications for both counselor education practices in this domain as well as the development of professional development training for school counselors. Limitations and recommendations for future studies are discussed in the study manuscripts.

Developing Professional School Counselor Self-Efficacy and Competence to Broach Career

Conversations in K-12 Through an Online Professional Development Training.

by

Christina Rogers

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I understand that my dissertation will become part of the permanent collection of Oregon State University libraries. My signature below authorizes release of my dissertation to any reader upon request.

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Christina Rogers, Author

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Developing an online training that is relevant to school counselors and ensuring it is worthy of study cannot solely be achieved by an overconfident doctoral student; it is

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF APPENDICES

DEDICATION

To Robert W. Carlson.

     For the past four years, to keep me motivated in those moments when I was sure I could not continue, you would kindly remind me that you hoped to be married to a doctor. It looks like it worked.

     Or, perhaps, my motivation to persevere was driven solely by the privilege of being granted this one page where I leave you a love note, buried in a document, cataloged, and stored in a university library.

<div align="center">Robert, I love you.</div>

Chapter 1: Thematic Introduction

I was seven or eight years old when my oldest sister Vivian and her boyfriend Dan surprised me by picking me up after school to drive me home. Vivian is 12 years older than me, and she left for Stanford University when I was much younger, so this surprise visit is a very big deal. On the drive home I am soaking in their focused attention like that dried, pathetic sponge sitting in the dark cabinet under the kitchen sink. To create some connection, or to avoid some awkwardness at meeting the littlest sister, Dan asks me what I want to be when I grow up. I quickly reply with "Psychologist" and without a beat, they both laugh. Vivian informs me that I can't be a psychologist because I don't like to read. I learned two lessons in that 3-block drive between the school and my home: (a) never tell anyone I want to be a psychologist and (b) I don't like to read.

Early memories, or earliest recollections, are considered a useful and welcome tool in the therapeutic environment. In 1912, Alfred Adler addressed the importance of early recollections in individual therapy as they provide insight into the client's "guiding fiction" or inferiority and misperceptions (White, 2021). Additionally, Mark Savickas' three early recollections, a powerful tool used in Career Construction theory, functions similarly in that they identify fixations— stories that repeatedly deliver messages about the self and the world (Maree, 2013). My fixations and the inferiority I carried with me stemming from that early experience persistently showed up in situations critical to my career self-concept; each time I completed an unsupervised assessment, walked the career fair aisles, and identified potential majors, the laughter and the fiction tagged along. At any point throughout my academic career, I would have benefited from a brief career conversation, a short dive into my experiences and the messages delivered to me

from the larger system that surrounded me. Those brief moments might have had the power to change how I perceived and reacted to my own career.

At any point in my K-12 experience, it would have taken little effort to identify the fiction in my story had I encountered an adult capable of conducting career conversations focused on my self-concept specific to my role as a student as opposed to conversations about careers, which I also never encountered. One effective approach to conducting career conversations incorporates tenets of Career Construction Theory, where the client and counselor identify contradictions to the fixation and challenge elements of the problematic career story (Savickas, 2005). These career conversations centered on the memory allow for a narrative process of deconstruction and reconstruction, or restorying (Maree, 2013). My hidden reality was that of a voracious reader. At the age of nine, I read the local paper every evening and I continue to read it daily. I never chose not to be a reader, but I did come from a home lacking age-appropriate books, evidenced by my weekly visits with our 20-volume encyclopedia just to read something new. I could not get a public library card due to a late charge incurred by Vivian, so I borrowed books using my friends' library cards. Finally, in high school I was a GATE student taking advanced English and social science courses. Occupational assessments were never able to capture this critical part of my academic and occupational identity as they magically pulled my future from a hat.

In this dual-manuscript dissertation, I explore the effect of an online asynchronous training on professional school counselors' self-efficacy and competence in conducting career conversations within K-12 schools. This study is a demonstration of scholarly work that uses the Manuscript Document Dissertation Format, as outlined by the Oregon State University Counseling Education Ph.D. Program Manual. Chapter 1 begins with an overview of the

evolving role professional school counselors play in the K-12 environment, specifically the career domain, and their challenges with that role. Detailed information about the online asynchronous training, along with the andragogical and learning theory framework, is presented. The first manuscript (Chapter 2) is focused on assessing professional school counselor self-efficacy to incorporate career conversations in K–12 prior to and after completing the online asynchronous training. The second manuscript (Chapter 3) assesses professional school counselors' ability to incorporate standards aligned and DEI connected career conversations into K–12 using a case study response prior to and after completing the training. This intervention, and the studies connected to it, seeks to address several challenges professional school counselors experience when addressing the career domain with K-12 students.

Rationale

Professional school counselors trace their professional roots to the vocational guidance movement beginning in the late 19th and early 20th century. Although school and career counseling textbooks frequently identify Frank Parsons as the earliest pioneer of career counseling (Niles & Harris-Bowlsbey, 2017; Sharf, 2010), he was not alone in responding to the quickly changing work and social environment triggered by the second Industrial Revolution. In 1881, Lysander Richards provided the first occupational title, Vocopher, for those who help others discover their gifts, talents, and interests and connect them to pursuits. In 1894, George A. Merrill created a high school focused on the mechanical arts, which may have been the first career-technical or trade school of its kind. Jesse B. Davis and Frank Parsons developed the first training programs for counselors in high school and youth/adult work transition programs, respectively, in the very early 1900's. The progressive movement at that time was centered on valuing human potential along with balancing the need to advance economic and social

efficiency, and these values still resonate today as a challenge professional school counselors face when attending to the needs of K-12 students as they develop their careers (Gysbers, 2010).

By the 1980s, and through the 1990s, the roles and identity of guidance counselors adjusted to the need to track the significantly advancing technological, social, legal, and personal changes within education and the world of work. Legislative efforts cemented the role of school counselors in education with career and vocational language starting with the Vocational Education Act of 1946 and the National Defense Education Act of 1958. Spurred by the space race of the 60s, school counselors' roles adjusted to focus on identifying and funneling students into science and technology. At the same time, gender roles shifted in response to an increased awareness of multiculturalism in society and the civil rights movement started to change the faces and focus of education. Funding for school counselors was established with the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 and 1969. Eventually, the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act of 1984, 1990, and 1998, modeled on previous legislation focused on vocational education, defining career guidance and counseling to include: career awareness, career planning, career decision-making, placement skills, and knowledge (Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education and Applied Technology Education Act of 1990; P.L. 101-392). These significant events drove a movement to identify a systematic and comprehensive approach to school counseling, one that focused on three domains serving all students beginning in elementary school: academic, career, and personal counseling (Gysbers, 2010).

With legislative and funding changes continuing to effect and define the school counseling profession into the 21st century, the American School Counseling Association (ASCA) published the first edition of the ASCA National Model in 2003, followed by three additional versions, with the most recent published in 2019 (ASCA, 2019a). Each version

consistently emphasizes the importance of career counseling as part of the professional school counselor role when working with K-12 students.

Currently, with the advent of the Fourth Industrial Revolution encompassing the physical, digital, and biological worlds (World Economic Forum, 2022) and the prospect of Artificial Intelligence ([AI] BipartisanPolicy, 2020) becoming the next workforce frontier, if not the workforce of the future, there is an even greater need for professional school counselors to successfully implement effective career-focused activities with all K-12 students. This new frontier requires professional school counselors to also be flexible and knowledgeable about postmodern career theories and interventions when approaching the career domain. The early 20th-century approach of assessing, exploring, and deciding on an occupation before leaving high school no longer produces adults who can successfully manage their career (Jarvis, 2006). Students leaving the K-12 system have long been entering a labor market where they will experience multiple jobs within many industries and sectors as they move through their career life-span. This reality requires individuals to possess career management skills that include self-reliance, the ability to cope with constant change, life and work balance, valuing lifelong learning, and knowing oneself (Jarvis, 2006). The Coalition for Career Development Center, in their report on the *Condition of Career Readiness in the United States* (Solberg, 2022), indicated six pillars that can contribute to youth and young adult proactivity, resilience, and adaptability in the new workforce. The report's recommendations include: more accountability in career readiness outcomes in Career Technical Education (CTE) programs, investment in the development of personal career and academic plans, the establishment of work-based learning for all youth, and investment in career advising. Considering the strong role school counselors have historically performed in the development and guidance of the future workforce, along with

the increasing need to adapt to an increasingly changing world of work, it is essential that professional school counselors confidently and competently update their approach to the career counselor role.

Professional School Counselor Training in the Career Domain

Practicing professional school counselors are either certificated, credentialed, or licensed in the state they work in, and there is no national credential or governing board overseeing or providing guidance on state decisions. Credentialing requirements for professional school counselors in each state can vary considerably in educational attainment, internship hours, and accreditation for training programs (ASCA, 2022, September 28). In addition to satisfying state-specific requirements for preparing professional school counselors, graduate programs may choose to structure courses to satisfy the ASCA Standards for School Counselor Preparation Programs ([SSCPP], 2022) and/or the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP, 2016) accreditation requirements.

As the national accreditation organization for graduate counseling programs in the United States, CACREP requires counselor education programs seeking accreditation to include career counseling instruction and activities covering, among other things, theories, and models; conceptualizing the interrelationships between work and other life roles; labor market information; assessment; and advocacy for diverse populations ([2.F.4]., CACREP, 2016). However, not all school counselor graduate programs are accredited by CACREP; and it is unclear whether non-CACREP-accredited school counselor training programs provide instruction in career development.

Additionally, in 2019, ASCA released the ASCA Standards for School Counselor Preparation Programs (SSCPP), which were approved by the Council for the Accreditation of

Educator Preparation (CAEP) and Specialized Professional Association (SPA) as a guide for graduate programs preparing candidates seeking licensure as a school counselor beginning in fall 2021. The SSCPP contains seven standards and 24 components that graduate programs are encouraged to implement into their school counseling curriculum and course framework. Of the 24 components, however, only two directly address college/career as part of school counselor preparation:

> 2.1 Describe established and emerging counseling and educational methods, including but not limited to childhood and adolescent development…group counseling, college/career readiness, and crisis response. 3.2 Identify research-based individual counseling, group counseling, and classroom instruction techniques…college/career readiness, and social/emotional development for every student (ASCA, 2022; 2022, October 20).

The SSCPP does not directly indicate how graduate counseling programs structure the content into the framework (e.g., one full class, a workshop); rather, similar to CACREP, the graduate program verifies that standards are met through formalized student assessment.

In 2000, a commission was created by the National Career Development Association (NCDA) and the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES) to explore the existing and anticipated changes occurring within the career counseling space and the need for counselor education programs to adjust the curriculum to reflect those changes. The position paper released in December of that year specifically called out the need to address counselor training in career by updating content to reflect the unique career needs of diverse populations, recognition that career counseling is personal counseling, the need for career services to children and youth, and an emphasis on lifelong learning as part of one's career. More specifically, the

paper emphasized the need to update career course content to include, among many other things: holistic approaches; a life-span definition of career; a reduced emphasis on trait factor interventions; connecting mental health with career-related issues; addressing meaning and purpose including spirituality; and instruction on models of transition, decision-making, and coping (Hansen, 2000). Given that the paper was released more than 20 years ago, and several generations of professional school counselors have likely completed a required course in career counseling designed to satisfy CACREP requirements, only a few studies explore how counselors-in-training are experiencing the career counseling course, and how prepared professional school counselors feel when addressing the career counseling role.

Existing research indicates that various factors play a role in counseling students' attitudes about the required career counseling course and their confidence in using career theories after completing the course. Lara et al. (2011) found that programmatic placement of the course, faculty language surrounding career, and peers' attitudes played a significant role in master's student perceptions prior to taking the course. Students also found it difficult to understand the course's relevance to their own counseling practice. Osborn and Dames (2013) found that courses incorporating career theory activities into students' own career process and that of their clients helped create relevance at the end of the course; however, students still did not feel competent to conduct career counseling. The same study of graduate career course instructors found they were covering career theories beyond trait factor to some degree, with the top three theories including Super's LifeSpan (96%), Krumboltzs' Social Learning Theory (82%), and Social Cognitive (81%) with Happenstance, Narrative, and Social Constructivism following close by.

Recent research has explored teaching strategies in career counseling preparation. For example, Lindo et al. (2019) tested a career course focused on implementing strategies to improve student perception of career counseling by acknowledging the intersection of career counseling with mental health and identifying career theories that integrate with students' current practice. The course had a positive impact on students' willingness to address career problems and themes with clients throughout the lifespan. These studies provide some insight into student experience and instructor approach when completing a course in career counseling. However, they do not directly explore or address professional school counselor confidence or competence in addressing career with K-12 students.

In contrast, extant research on professional school counselors' conceptions of their competency in approaching career counseling indicates they need and would like additional training. For instance, Morgan et al., (2014) discovered that professional school counselors felt their counselor education programs leaned heavily on just learning about career theories and did not provide enough instruction on how to incorporate the theories into their work with students. Additionally, professional school counselors do not feel qualified to use career theories, nor can they identify a standard that guides practice to implement them. This is evidenced in a study where more than half of the participants identified a trait-factor theory, primarily Holland's RIASEC which is an occupational matching inventory developed in the 1960's as their primary approach to the career domain with students. In that same study, 100 school counselors indicated they did not use a career theory or were not familiar with the theories listed in the questionnaire (Osborn & Baggerly, 2004). Additionally, only 37% of school counselors in a recent study indicated being well prepared to discuss job- and work-related options with students, which was mediated with additional training (Novakovic et al., 2021).

This sense of lack of preparation among school counselors affects all students, but none so much as those students whose paths are unconventional; an example of one such group includes students who are undocumented or who fall under the tenuous Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) designation. School counselors are in a unique position to enact their advocacy role to protect and inform this population when addressing work and school limitations; however, school counselors feel unprepared to do so (Storlie, 2016). This is not to say they feel the topic is not important, they do feel that all the components of career are very important; rather, professional school counselors indicate they need more training in career development (75%) to effectively help students in this domain (Anctil, 2012). Findings further indicate that a large majority (82%) of these counselors seek out additional training on the topic (Bridgeland & Bruce, 2011). However, there is a gap in the research literature addressing the effectiveness of professional development training for professional school counselors on implementing the career domain.

Professional school counselors who choose to seek out career counselor training outside of their graduate counseling programs and professional worksites have limited options. One professional development option is through the National Career Development Association (NCDA), an affiliate of the American Counseling Association (ACA). NCDA "provides professional development, publications, standards, and advocacy to practitioners and educators who inspire and empower individuals to achieve their career and life goals (NCDA, 2022, para. 1)." NCDA is recognized for providing training and career credentials to varying levels of practitioners, including the Certified School Career Development Advisor (CSCDA) credential developed for career persons serving in 7-12 environments (NCDA, 2022a). While NCDA provides a mechanism to earn the credential without training (a graduate degree in school

counseling, three years' experience providing career development services, and passing various scenario assessments), training courses are also provided to satisfy credential requirements: the Facilitating Career Development (FCD) training, and the School Career Development Advisor (SCDA) training.

The online hybrid training options offered by master trainers advertised on the NCDA site may be completed separately with a time commitment of about eight weeks and a minimum cost of $1,250 not including material costs; or a combined training with a time commitment of three months and a minimum cost of $2,075 not including material costs (NCDA, 2022b). School counselors are not guaranteed to have the costs covered by their school districts or for the training time to be structured into their workday. Choosing to complete this training typically requires that they use their own funds, attend synchronous course meetings, and a potential time commitment during school hours. The SCDA training is geared towards training career persons, not specifically professional school counselors, working in the schools to learn how to work with local companies and other community workforce providers to increase student skills, knowledge, and credentials for entering the job market (M. Powell, personal communication, January 10, 2023). The present two studies seek to address the research gap on effective methods to improve school counselor self-efficacy and competency in implementing the career counseling role through professional development training.

Theoretical Framework

In these two dissertation studies, we explore the effectiveness of an asynchronous online training course developed specifically for professional school counselors called *Career Conversations in K-12: Demystifying the School Counselor Role.* This training is structured to address school counselor competency and perceived self-efficacy in conducting career

conversations with their students. The development of this training in an asynchronous online format is essential as it provides autonomy to participants to interact with the content on an easy-to-access platform in their own time and engage with fellow participants from anywhere (Bridges & Frazier, 2018). This training is structured to meet the design standards addressed in the Quality Matters Continuing and Professional Education Rubric ([QM rubric], 2015). The QM rubric is relied on to guide module structure, course format, accessibility, selection and development of the learning materials, and assessments.

Further, this training is grounded in constructivist learning practices and is guided by a contemporary approach to Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle (1984) with concrete experiences beginning in Module 1, and Modules 2-4 cycling through abstract conceptualization, reflective observation, and culminating with active experimentation (Mughal & Zafar, 2011). The development, provision, and evaluation of this training addresses a gap in the research within the field of school counseling and the career domain.

Career Conversations in K-12: Demystifying the School Counselor Role

In response to the apparent need for accessible and relevant professional development training on broaching career conversations with K-12 students, a completely online and asynchronous training program was developed and built within the Free-for-Teacher Canvas learning platform (www.canvas.instructure.com) titled, "Career Conversations in K-12: Demystifying the School Counselor Role." This training program uses an andragogical approach (Knowles, 1984) to professional development training as it addresses a problem specific to the school counselor role and acknowledges the experience and knowledge they already possess on the topic. Further, this training provides varied learning materials that are immediately accessible, and activities tailored to address the career counseling role unique to school

counselors. Participants immediately apply the knowledge by creating interventions addressing

the career domain with their students as part of the assessment. The training is self-directed, and

to a degree participants determine how they will incorporate career conversations into their work

to satisfy the required formative assessments.

The estimated 9-hour training consists of four learning modules covering an overview of

career definitions: job, occupation, career, and career conversations; the intrapersonal domain of

career problem assessment conceptualized by Dr. Louis A. Busacca (2002) and roles within that

domain: career counselor, career development, and career adjustment (Module 1). Three training

modules (Modules 2-4) are dedicated to each of the roles, and each is connected to cross walked

ASCA Student Standards (2021), NCDA National Career Development Guidelines (2007), and

the Collaborative for Social, Academic, and Emotional Learning Framework ([CASEL], 2022).

Learning materials for each of the three modules include: career theories provided in multiple

formats, modified career conversation starters (ASCA, 2022) for each grade level, lecture and

case study videos, links to relevant websites, guides to support integration of each role into the

Multi-Tier Systems of Support (MTSS), and a diversity, equity, and inclusion section with

content and scenarios relevant to each role. A table with an overview of the full training is

provided in Appendix A.

Learning assessments built into each module further engage participants in a

constructivist learning format by encouraging participants to reflect on what they know, what

they have learned, and identify additional approaches to increase understanding of the topic

covered in each module (McAuliffe & Eriksen, 2010). A low-risk quiz at the end of Module 1

allows participants to assess in real time the level of their understanding on the topics provided in

the module and provides unlimited opportunities for participants to review the materials to ensure understanding (Carrion, 2021).

An essential element of online learning is the use of effective online discussions. Online discussions must include a strategic application scenario, and when done well, incorporate a sense of community, social presence, and a direct connection with the learning materials (Darabi et al., 2013; Obizoba, 2016). Reflection prompts are incorporated into Modules 1-4 directing participants to further explore the career topics and relevant career theories addressed in each module. Additionally, experiential discussion activity posts, "Share Your Work!" in Modules 2-4 require participants to apply their new knowledge to develop a career conversation intervention within an MTSS tier which can be used with the students they currently serve. A pre and posttest serve as a summative assessment to be completed by participants prior to, and at the completion of the full training. It is hypothesized that the combination of effective online course structure, a variety of learning materials, and relevant assessments will have a positive effect on participant competence and self-efficacy to address the career domain with K-12 students using intrapersonal career conversations.

Seven individuals in the counseling, career, and educational fields reviewed the online training modules. Four school counselor educators, one curriculum development specialist, one professional school counselor, and one state career development program director provided feedback and recommendations. Revisions were made based on their feedback.

The dissertation project is designed to address four research questions related to the training modules. Manuscripts 1 and 2 address self-efficacy and competency separately.

Chapter 2: Manuscript 1

The purpose of Manuscript 1 was to assess whether taking an online asynchronous training covering the intrapersonal domain of career problems has an effect on professional school counselors' self-efficacy in incorporating career conversations into K–12 career counseling. The quasi-experimental, pre- and posttest study is titled "Developing Professional School Counselors' Self-Efficacy Broaching Career Conversations Through an Online Training Course". The research question guiding the Chapter 2 study was: "What is the effect of an online training course covering career conversations on professional school counselor self-efficacy to broach career conversations in K–12 schools"? We hypothesized that participants who complete the online training will demonstrate a statistically significant increase in self-efficacy as measured by the modified School Counselor Self-Efficacy Scale (SCSES; Bodenhorn & Skaggs, 2005) and the modified Career Counselor Self-Efficacy Scale (CCSES; O' Brien et al., 1997).

The participants of this study were practicing professional school counselors with greater than one year of experience working at any level in K–12 ($n = 38$). Participants' self-efficacy, specifically their beliefs in their ability to conduct career conversations (Bandura, 2006), were measured before and after completing the online training. The pre- and posttest surveys (Appendix D) incorporated five questions from the Career and Academic Development subscale of the School Counselor Self-Efficacy Scale (SCSES; Bodenhorn & Skaggs, 2005) and 15 questions from three subscales within the Career Counselor Self-Efficacy Scale (CCSES; O' Brien et al., 1997). Internal reliability for each subscale was deemed sufficiently consistent for both the pre- and posttest. Pre- and posttest data were analyzed using a single-tail paired t-test for each subscale and for total self-efficacy. Data indicates there was a statistically significant increase in participant self-efficacy, with a mean difference ranging between 0.72 and 1.17 and a p-value for each subscale and total self-efficacy being less than 0.05. Overall, the results

supported the hypothesis, which is encouraging for professional school counselors seeking

asynchronous online learning as an option to increase their self-efficacy in the career domain.

Chapter 3: Manuscript 2

The purpose of Manuscript 2 was to assess whether online asynchronous training

contributes to professional school counselors' ability to incorporate a developmentally

appropriate intrapersonal career conversation intervention with a K–12 counseling case study. It

is titled "Developing Professional School Counselors' Competence in Broaching Career

Conversations Through an Online Training Course". The participants of this study were

practicing professional school counselors with greater than one year of experience working at

any level in K–12 ($n = 38$). Participant competency to incorporate career conversations using

relevant and developmentally appropriate career conversations is assessed using a pre- and

posttest case study. Participants were also assessed in their ability to connect relevant ASCA

student mindset standards, NCDA goals, and CASEL competencies to the case study

intervention and recognize any DEI considerations (Appendix E). We hypothesized that

participants who completed the online training would demonstrate competency to broach career

conversations using a case study, as measured by incorporating relevant and developmentally

appropriate career questions, standards, and DEI considerations.

The research questions guiding the Chapter 3 study were:

1. What is the effect of an online training course on professional school counselors' ability
   to incorporate career conversation interventions with K–12 students?

2. What is the effect of an online training course on professional school counselors' ability
   to connect their career conversations with ASCA, NCDA, and CASEL standards?

3. What is the effect of an online training course on professional school counselors' ability to consider DEI when working with a student in the career domain?

Participant performance was determined by two doctoral-level counselor educators serving as raters using a standardized rubric specific to the pre- and posttest case studies. Interrater reliability was calculated for both the pre- and posttests using Fleiss' Kappa. For the pretest, categories ranged between 0.38 and 0.67, which is considered fair to substantial agreement. For the posttest, categories ranged between 0.66 and 0.94, which is considered substantial to almost perfect agreement. Participant ratings for the pre- and posttest case studies were analyzed using a paired t-test for the career conversation category and the McNemar x^2 test for rating use of standards and DEI awareness. The paired *t*-test for career conversations indicates there was a statistically significant increase in competency in broaching career conversations, with an overall mean difference of 0.55 and a *p*-value less than 0.05. The McNemar x^2 test suggests an effect for the use of standards when broaching career conversations with $x^2(1) =20.05$ and $p < 0.05$ for both raters, while no effect can be connected to the training for considering DEI with $x^2(1) =0$ and $p = 1$. In the end, the results supported the hypotheses for questions 1 and 2, but the null hypothesis could not be rejected for question 3. A discussion of the study results, limitations, and implications for school counselor competency in this area is provided in the manuscript.

Chapter 4

In chapter 4, I discuss the findings of the two studies. The chapter's focus is on interpreting the impact of the online training course on participant self-efficacy and competence and discussing practical implications for school counselors. The limitations of the studies are also discussed.

Thematic Connection Between the Two Manuscripts and Significance

Manuscripts 1 and 2 link thematically through the evaluation of the online training developed for professional school counselors, *Career Conversations in K–12: Demystifying the School Counselor Role*. Both studies utilized professional school counselors as participants and explored the effects the training had on their professional development in the career domain. The findings in this dissertation have the potential to inform future training for professional school counselors as they develop and implement the career domain. The studies also have the potential to inform career counseling training strategies via asynchronous, web-based modalities. The studies seek to address gaps in professional school counselor training and literature related to training in the career domain. Ultimately, they have the potential to address K-12 needs in addressing career and student experiences with their school counselors as they develop their career.

Summary

Given the constantly changing world of work and the need to prepare students for the workforce of the future, it is essential to update professional school counselor practice and self-efficacy in addressing the career domain in K–12. While professional school counselors have a strong history of serving as vocational guidance counselors, their responsibilities to address student academic and social-emotional needs have rightly become additional core focuses of their duties. This change is evident in graduate counselor education programs' prioritization of school system and clinical courses over career counseling courses, as well as attitudes towards the required career counseling course. Professional school counselors' hesitancy to implement career-focused activities and conversations reflects their lack of confidence in that role. Presently, there is a gap in accessible training specifically for professional school counselors on

implementing career conversations into existing academic and social-emotional interventions. This dissertation topic addresses this gap through the development of an online course and an evaluation of its efficacy in increasing professional school counselors' self-efficacy and competence in addressing the career domain. It is my hope that both studies will provide empirical findings that can guide future counselor training and approaches to career counseling in K–12.

Journal Submissions

Both manuscripts will be submitted to journals associated with professional school counselor education and professional practice. Manuscript 1 will be submitted to the American School Counseling Association (ASCA) journal *Professional School Counseling*. Manuscript 2 will be submitted to the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision journal *Counselor Education and Supervision.*

Research Funding

These studies have been awarded a research grant from the Western Association of Counselor Education and Supervision (WACES).

Glossary of Terms

Andragogy: a humanistic approach to educating adult learners; recognition that adult learners are self-directed and autonomous (Knowles, 1984).

Career: the combination of lifestyle activities and roles throughout one's life, including jobs, occupations, hobbies, family roles, educational roles; the totality of work over the course of a lifetime, and the importance one assigns to it. (Super, 1976; Niles & Harris-Bowlsbey, 2017)

Career adjustment role: conversations that occur within this role explore how a client is adjusting to changing and unexpected situations; the objective is to help clients adjust to these events by developing coping and resilience skills (Busacca, 2002).

Career conversations: conversations with a client that encompass a reflection on one's full career and an exploration of elements one would like to include in their career. An ecological systems approach to understanding the inter and intrapersonal events in one's career development from a strengths-based perspective (ASCA, 2017).

Career counselor role: conversations that occur within this role address a client's self-concept, their approach to meaning making, as well as their conscious and unconscious processes; the objective is to help clients identify and describe those self-concepts, intersecting identities, and decision-making process (Busacca, 2002).

Career development role: conversations that occur within this role explore how a client adapts to multiple life roles within the context of school and work; the objective is to, "prepare a client to anticipate, become aware of, and cope with concerns arising within the stages of the career life span" (Busacca, 2002, p. 133).

Career readiness: Skills, knowledge, and personal qualities contributing to success in college and career-focused environments (College & Career Readiness & Success Center, 2014).

Competence: The state or quality of ability (The Random House Unabridged Dictionary, 2023).

Intrapersonal domain: a focus on one's feelings, emotions, and cognitions; growth-seeking and understanding one's psychological responses to reduce discomfort (Busacca, 2002).

Multi-Tier System of Support (MTSS): a comprehensive framework of applying equitable, evidence based, and preventive interventions to improve the outcomes for all students to achieve academically and behaviorally (Goodman-Scott et al., 2019).

Professional development: a process where an individual acquires or enhances their skills, knowledge, and/or attitudes for improved practice within their current profession (Mitchell, 2013).

Self-efficacy: the personal belief in one's capability to complete a task or manage a situation (Bandura, 2006).

Chapter 2

Developing Professional School Counselors' Self-Efficacy Broaching Career Conversations Through an Online Training Course

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Abstract

Professional school counselors are considered the first-line providers of career-focused counseling and activities in K–12 schools. Addressing the career domain, however, is an area school counselors feel least efficacious broaching with students, reducing the likelihood the domain is addressed effectively and equitably. The purpose of this study is to investigate the effectiveness of an online asynchronous training program designed to help increase school counselor self-efficacy in broaching career conversations in K–12 schools. A national sample of school counselor participants ($n = 38$) serving students at all educational levels completed pretest and posttest self-efficacy scales utilizing modified sub-scales from the School Counselor Self-Efficacy Scale (SCSES; Bodenhorn & Skaggs, 2005) and the Career Counselor Self-Efficacy Scale (CCSES; O' Brien et al., 1997), along with a 9-hour online asynchronous training titled, *Career Conversations in K–12: Demystifying the School Counselor Role*. The data indicated there was a statistically significant increase in participant self-efficacy as a result of the training, with an overall self-efficacy mean difference of 0.91. The Multicultural Competency Skills sub-scale displayed the highest mean difference increase of 1.17. Based on these results, asynchronous online training in the career domain may serve as an alternative to in-person instruction to increase school counselor self-efficacy.

Keywords: school counselor, career domain, online training, self-efficacy

As the economy and world-of-work responds to the impacts of a global pandemic and climate change, they are reckoning with the changes that come with the advent of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, including the increasing inclusion of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and the impact it has on the workforce (World Economic Forum, 2022, September 27; Bipartisan Policy Center, 2020). These emerging global workforce realities require individuals to possess career readiness skills that are not being addressed by the 3-step process pioneered by Frank Parsons more than 100 years ago of: understanding self, exploring occupations, and choosing a future occupation based on the connections of the first two steps (Parsons, 1908). However, this practice is still the primary approach practiced in K–12 schools to address the career domain (Gysbers, 2010; Jarvis, 2006). Considering the key role professional school counselors play in the development and guidance of the future workforce and the increasing need to adapt to a fast-changing world of work, it is essential that these counselors can confidently implement effective intrapersonal career-focused activities with all K–12 students. Professional school counselors possess the unique privilege of igniting student curiosity, encouraging interests, and developing career readiness skills (Alger & Luke, 2015; American School Counselor Association [ASCA], 2019b). However, research has reported low professional school counselor self-efficacy to address career concerns with students, implement programs focused on career decision-making, use technology to support student success, and deliver age-appropriate programs to acquire the skills to investigate the world of work (Sanders et al., 2017).

Regardless of the level of self-efficacy in assisting students in career readiness, supporting career development for all students reflects one of the key job duties unique to professional school counselors, particularly those who are developing or implementing a comprehensive school counseling program (ASCA, 2017). ASCA has defined school counselor

standards and competency in the career development domain as encompassing mindsets and behaviors to effectively use emerging career theories to help students understand the connection between their approach to school roles and developing work roles, as well as school-to-work and work/college transition planning (ASCA, 2019a; 2019b). The National Career Development Association (NCDA, 2011) further supports professional school counselors in addressing the career domain by providing policy statement guidelines defining career as a life-stage process, providing guidance away from activities focused on occupational selection, and a push toward the development of lifelong career management skills. The counseling profession clearly identifies and supports professional school counselors as the first-line providers to develop programs addressing the career domain for students in K–12.

As such, school counselors are expected to provide lessons on career readiness at each grade level relevant to the developmental stage of the students. Therefore, student interactions with their school counselor should include a diverse range of career-focused conversations and experiences throughout their time in school (ASCA, 2017). This can include fantasy play and identity exploration for elementary students; problem-solving skills; time and money budgeting for middle school students; and connecting students to work experiences in high school. School counselors may also serve as advocates for students exploring alternate paths to entering the world of work (Grimes et al., 2017). Creating career-ready students is a goal of a comprehensive school counseling program and is achieved by professional school counselors through a holistic, strengths-based approach to the career domain. Career-ready students have the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to imagine their futures, engage in life roles including learner and worker, and connect these spaces to the importance of their schooling and interpersonal relationships (Gysbers, 2013; Gysbers & Lapan, 2009).

Professional school counselors who successfully integrate career development activities into their counseling programs increase positive student engagement with their school, teachers, classmates, and academic learning (Kenny et al., 2006). Given the significant changes occurring in the world of work, the importance of students becoming career-ready by developing career self-management skills, the importance ASCA and NCDA ascribe to the school counselor role, and research indicating low school counselor self-efficacy in implementing career counseling interventions, it is imperative to address ways to improve professional school counselor self-efficacy in implementing career domain tasks at their school sites (Lara et al., 2011; Morgan et al., 2014; Osborn & Baggerly, 2004; Sanders et al., 2017).

School Counselor Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy is the personal belief in one's capability to complete a task or manage a situation (Bandura, 2006). Behavioral outcomes related to self-efficacy include an individual's likelihood to approach or avoid a task, specific performance outcomes affected by the sense of self-efficacy leading up to the task, and one's persistence to complete the task when faced with obstacles such as poor performance (Bandura, 2006). Counselor self-efficacy refers to counselors' beliefs about their own ability to effectively serve a client, and it plays a necessary role in effective clinical practice (Schiele et al., 2014) as well as in conducting suicide risk assessments (Gallo, 2018). Related studies on school counselor self-efficacy in general found that job resources play a protective role in increasing self-efficacy and preventing school counselor burnout (Bardhoshi & Um, 2021). Bodenhorn et al. (2010) found that professional school counselors with increased self-efficacy were more aware of achievement gap data and more likely to address it. Similarly, Mullen and Lambie (2016) identified positive self-efficacy as a factor causing an increased frequency of programmatic service delivery to support students

by professional school counselors. With self-efficacy as a predictor of counselor effectiveness, persistence, and positive student outcomes (Osborn & Baggerly, 2004), what effect might it have on school counselors addressing the career domain with their students?

Studies focused on the behaviors and outcomes related to school counselor self-efficacy and the career domain support Bandura's (2006) assertion that an individual is unlikely to approach a task when they do not believe the approach will be effective. In one study, school counselors identified key career topics they felt the least efficacious in addressing, including understanding the impact of gender and culture when using assessments, understanding the impact of intersecting identities on career development, and understanding local and national job information (Perrone et al., 2000). A much later qualitative study on school counselor perceptions of career counseling identified the theme of incompetence as a contributor to counselors' lack of willingness to approach the career domain (Morgan et al., 2014). One participant in the study shared their internal preference that a student seek them out for assistance on suicidal ideation instead of a career concern as an extreme example of avoidance of the topic (Morgan et al., 2014). A recent study that examined middle school counselors' self-efficacy in addressing career counseling topics reported that participants felt most confident in their therapeutic process and alliance skills and least confident in multicultural competency, trends in the world of work, career ethics, research, and special issues pertaining to identity (Sanders et al., 2017). However, research shows that increasing training in career and college readiness and the removal of barriers for school counselors to obtain training results in increased school counselor self-efficacy to implement career and college readiness activities with students (Parikh-Foxx et al., 2020). These extant findings indicate that professional school counselors need more training in career counseling. Such a need may be related to training barriers. However, despite the

current proliferation of online continuing education for professional counselors, there has yet to

be a study that examines the impact of an online training on professional school counselors' self-

efficacy to incorporate career conversations in K–12.

Training Barriers

Key training-related barriers to school counselors' preparedness in delivering career-

related counseling services to students include counselor education accreditation requirements,

state credentialing requirements, and access to free or low-cost and time-flexible professional

development training. Students in a counseling program accredited by the Council for

Accreditation of Counseling and Related Programs (CACREP, 2016) are required to receive

training in all the standards in the core area of career development. However, not all counselor

education programs are CACREP-accredited, and not one state school counselor credentialing or

licensure board requires school counselors to graduate from a CACREP-accredited program

(ASCA, 2022, September 28). Even with CACREP accreditation, a gap exists between what is

expected to be taught in the career counseling curriculum and what is being taught in school

counselor education programs (Morgan et al., 2014). In certain states, school districts may

choose to hire individuals without graduate training in counseling as school counselors using an

emergency school counselor license (Oregon Teacher Standards and Practice Commission, 2022,

November 15; Solmonson et al., 2011). It stands to reason that these school counselors might not

have received the necessary preparation to conduct career counseling at the school.

School counselors who self-elect to receive training in career counseling may complete

the Certified School Career Development Advisor (CSCDA) credential developed by the

National Career Development Association (NCDA) for career service providers serving in K–12

environments (NCDA, 2022). The credential requirements include completing the Facilitating

Career Development training and the School Career Development Advisor (SCDA) training, offered as an online training. The SCDA training focuses on training career service providers to develop relationships with the community workforce and companies to develop programs to increase student work readiness. The training may be completed individually with a time commitment of about eight weeks and a minimum cost of $1,250, not including material costs, or as a combined training with a time commitment of three months and a minimum cost of $2,075, not including material costs (NCDA, 2022a). Given the considerable time and financial costs of such training, it explains why professional school counselors identify training as a barrier to their competency in the career domain.

Career Conversations in K-12: Demystifying the School Counselor Role

A completely online and asynchronous training program was developed and built within the Free-for-Teacher Canvas learning platform (www.canvas.instructure.com) titled, *Career Conversations in K–12: Demystifying the School Counselor Role*. This training program uses an andragogical approach (Knowles, 1984) to professional development training as it addresses a problem specific to the school counselor role and provides opportunities for participants to incorporate the new knowledge into their existing practice.

The training takes approximately 9 hours to complete across four learning modules with associated assignments. The first module covers an overview of career definitions, the intrapersonal domain of career problem assessment conceptualized by Dr. Louis A. Busacca (2002), and roles within that domain. Modules 2-4 are dedicated to each of the roles, and they are cross walked to ASCA Student Standards (2021), NCDA National Career Development Guidelines (2007), and the CASEL framework (2022). Learning materials for each of the three modules include: career theories provided in multiple formats; modified career conversation

starters (ASCA, 2022) for each grade level; lecture and case study videos; links to relevant websites; guides to support integration of each role into the MTSS tiers (Goodman-Scott et al., 2019); and a diversity, equity, and inclusion section with content and scenarios relevant to each role. The training content and format have been reviewed by seven professionals with backgrounds in curriculum design, counselor education, professional school counseling, and statewide career services. Feedback and recommendations provided by reviewers have been incorporated, where relevant. A table with an overview of the full training is provided in Appendix A.

Purpose of the Study

In response to the above-mentioned need for more focused and accessible career counseling training for school counselors and gaps in the literature, the present study investigates the effectiveness of an online asynchronous training program designed to help increase school counselor self-efficacy in broaching career conversations in K–12 schools. Specifically, this online asynchronous training program connects the intrapersonal domain and roles of career problem conceptualization (Busacca, 2002) with relevant career theories and incorporates career conversation prompts developed by ASCA (2022) with relevant ASCA, NCDA, and Collaborative for Academic and Social Emotional Learning (CASEL, 2022) goals and standards. It also addresses career challenges through a diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) lens. The research question guiding the study was: What is the effect of a 9-hour, self-paced, online training course covering career conversations on professional school counselors' self-efficacy in broaching career conversations in K–12 schools? The study hypothesized that participants who completed the online training would demonstrate a statistically significant increase in self-efficacy as measured by the modified School Counselor Self-Efficacy Scale (SCSES; Bodenhorn

& Skaggs, 2005) and the modified Career Counselor Self-Efficacy Scale (CCSES; O' Brien et al., 1997) compared to their pre-training scores.

Method

This study utilized a quasi-experimental pretest-posttest design. School counselor self-efficacy in broaching career conversations in K–12 schools was measured prior to the training and after completion of all training activities. The pre- and posttest surveys were developed using five questions from the Career and Academic Development subscale used in the SCSES (Bodenhorn & Skaggs, 2005) and 15 questions from three subscales within the CCSES (O' Brien et al., 1997). A paired sample t-test was performed to compare participant pre- and posttest scores for each of the modified self-efficacy scales and for overall self-efficacy. We conducted a post hoc power analysis using G* POWER 3.1 (Faul et al., 2009) for a single-tail paired t-test for 38 participants with $\alpha = 0.05$ and an effect size of 0.50, which calculated the power at 0.91.

Participant recruitment commenced following the study's determination as exempt by the Oregon State University Institutional Review Board (Appendix B). A 2-page informational flyer was developed containing details about the study, the training, and a link to a Google form that served as a participant screener (Appendix C). The recruitment process involved sharing the flyer via email with professional contacts to initiate snowball recruitment. The flyer was emailed to school counselor association leadership in all 50 states in the United States as well. Several state associations declined to share it with members unless a fee was paid or because of privacy policies. In the states that declined, the information was shared with school counselor graduate programs in the hope they would share it with alumni. The California Association of School Counselors (CASC) advertised the training and study in their bi-weekly Counselor Connection

email to all members in early spring. The training and study flyers were also posted on ASCA

Scene in early spring and again in early summer of 2023.

Participants

Study participants were required to meet the following criteria at the time of the

recruitment period: (a) be credentialed or licensed as a school counselor in their state; (b) work

full or part time in that role in the prior 12 months at a public or private elementary, middle, or

high school in the United States; and (c) possess at least one year of experience as a school

counselor. and (d) not concurrently completing a career counseling course or training. Interested

participants (181) completed an interest survey collecting basic information, including name,

email address, work title at the school, working status in the prior 12 months, credential or

license information, attendance in any career counseling training, and a space for questions by

the participant. Nine respondents did not meet the research criteria due to either not possessing a

school counseling credential in their state or their participation in a career-focused training at the

same time as the study. The remaining 172 respondents received an email via Qualtrics with a

link to the informed consent, pretest, and demographic survey.

Of the 172 screened-in respondents who received the Qualtrics link, 92 (53%) completed

the informed consent, pretest, and demographic survey and were added to the Canvas training

site as students. Participants in the training received timely feedback and scoring as they

completed reflections and discussion posts. Participants were considered to have completed the

training when all eight activities spanning the four modules were completed and scored with an

overall score of at least 70% prior to the training deadline. Once participants completed the

training, they received a Qualtrics email with a personalized link to the posttest as well as an

additional email with a course evaluation necessary to receive 9 NBCC continuing education

units, which was optional. Of those who gained access to the training, 41% (N=38) completed all training activities, including the posttest, at the close of the five-month training window. Participants who completed the training and posttest received a $100 gift card. Participant pre- and posttest data and demographic information were collected using Qualtrics, and all identifying information was coded in a password-protected spreadsheet on a biometrically secure laptop. The participant's mean login time to the training was 12 hours and 58 minutes, with a standard deviation of 6 hours and 25 minutes.

Demographics

Participants consisted of 34 females and 4 males serving as school counselors in 16 states: Connecticut, Iowa, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Ohio, South Carolina, Texas, and Washington each had 1 participant. Arkansas, Florida, Michigan, Nevada, and Tennessee had 2. Indiana had 3, California had 8, and nine participants were from Wisconsin. A majority of participants identified as white (76%) along with Asian, Pacific Islander, or Native Hawaiian (8%), Black or African American (8%), or other (8%). Of all participants, 8% also identified as Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish. The school counselors served a variety of grades, and as a result, not all participants fell within the traditional elementary, middle, and high school ranges: elementary: 7, elementary and middle: 3, middle: 8, middle and high: 5, high: 13, and K-12: 2. Years of experience as a school counselor ranged between 1 and 25 years. 1–5 years: 13, 6–10 years: 11, 11–15 years: 3, 16–20 years: 7, and 21–25 years: 4. The majority of participants (n=27) spent less than 25% of their time on career topics with students, 9 spent less than 50%, and 2 spent up to 75% of their time on career topics. Most school counselors (n=23) attended CACREP-accredited graduate programs; 6 were from a non-CACREP-accredited program; and 9 were unsure of their program accreditation. This was the first career counseling training for 5

participants. 16 received at least one course in career counseling in their graduate program; 15 completed at least one course in their graduate program and attended career-focused workshops at ASCA conferences; and 2 indicated their only training came from career-focused workshops at ASCA conferences. One participant was licensed as Marriage and Family counselor; two were Licensed Professional Counselors, and three also possessed a National Certified Counselor credential.

Measures

The 20-item pre and posttest (Appendix D) developed for this study includes five items from the SCSES Career and Academic Development subscale with a reported reliability coefficient of 0.85 (Bodenhorn & Skaggs, 2005; Sanders et al., 2017), and 15 items from the CCSES consisting of three subscales: Therapeutic Process and Alliance Skills (8 items) with a reported internal reliability of 0.93, Multicultural Competency Skills (6 items) with a reported internal reliability of .92, and 1 item out of 3 from the Current Trends in the World of Work, Ethics, and Career Research with a reported internal reliability of 0.76 (O'Brien et al., 1997; Sanders et al., 2017).

Cronbach's alpha was used to calculate the internal reliability of each subscale for each pretest and posttest (see Table 1.1). The Current Trends in the World of Work, Ethics, and Career Research subscale was not included as it only contained one item. The scores exceed the typical value of 0.70, indicating they are sufficiently consistent.

Responses for the CCSES were self-reported using a Likert-type scale: 1 = *not confident*, 2, 3 = *moderately confident*, 4, and 5 = *highly confident*. Approval for the question selection and modification of the scale instructions was granted via email by Dr. Karen O'Brien (personal communication, September 22, 2022). All items referencing 'client' were changed to counselee,

as school counselors do not refer to students as clients. Scale instructions were changed to: *Indicate your belief in your capacity or skill to currently perform this activity,* from the original scale instruction: *Indicate your confidence in your current ability to perform each activity*.

Table 1.1

Results from a Cronbach's Alpha Test for Internal Reliability

Scale	Pretest α	Posttest α
CCSES- modified	0.89	0.88
TPAS sub-scale	0.83	0.76
MCS sub-scale	0.90	0.89
SCSES: CADS	0.84	0.76

Note: TPAS is Therapeutic Process and Alliance Skills; MCS is Multicultural Competency Skills; CCSES is Career Counseling Self-Efficacy Scale; SCSES: CADS is School Counseling Self-Efficacy Scale: Career and Academic Development Subscale.

Approval for the SCSES question selection and modification of the scale instructions was granted via email by Dr. Nancy Bodenhorn (personal communication, September 23, 2022). Scale instructions were changed to: *Indicate your belief in your capacity or skill to currently perform this activity,* from the original scale instruction: *Indicate your confidence in your current ability to perform each activity*. Participants self-reported their self-efficacy using a 5-point Likert-type scale: 1 = *not confident*, 2 = *slightly confident*, 3 = *moderately confident*, 4 = *generally confident*, and 5 = *highly confident*.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted using R (2018) statistical software. The Shapiro-Wilk normality test was used to determine the normal distribution with the dependent pre- and posttest values. A paired sample *t*-test was performed to compare participant pre- and posttest scores for each of the modified self-efficacy scales and for overall self-efficacy.

Results

The pretest and posttest mean for each subscale and overall self-efficacy ranged between 3.58 and 3.97 and 4.30 and 4.69, respectively. The mean difference ranged between 0.72 and 1.17. Table 1.2 provides descriptive statistics for each. The data indicate there was a statistically significant increase in participant self-efficacy, as the *p*-value for each scale was less than 0.05. A table providing the mean difference, *t*-score, and *p*-value for each scale item is provided in Appendix F.

Table 1.2

Results from a One-Tailed Paired t-test: Self-Efficacy Scales

Scale	Pretest *Mean* *(SD)*	Posttest *Mean* *(SD)*	*Mean diff.*	*t- score*	*p-value*
CCSES-modified	3.58 (0.57)	4.51 (0.33)	0.93	8.68*	1.899e-10
TPAS sub-scale	3.97 (0.55)	4.69 (0.30)	0.72	7.47*	6.744e-09
MCS sub-scale	3.14 (0.80)	4.30 (0.47)	1.17	8.15*	8.864e-10
SCSES: CADS	3.70 (0.71)	4.53 (0.38)	0.83	6.89*	3.925e-08
Total Self-Efficacy	3.61 (0.56)	4.52 (0.32)	0.91	8.55*	2.696e-10

Note: *N*=38. CCSES is Career Counseling Self-Efficacy Scale; TPAS is Therapeutic Process and Alliance Skills; MCS is Multicultural Competency Skills; SCSES: CADS is School Counseling Self-Efficacy Scale: Career and Academic Development Scale. *Significant at *p< 0.05*.

The research question guiding this study explores the effect of a 9-hour, self-paced, online training course covering career conversations on professional school counselors' self-efficacy in broaching career conversations in K–12 schools. The study hypothesized that participants completing the online training would demonstrate a statistically significant increase in self-efficacy as measured by their posttest scores compared to their pretest scores. Based on the data analysis, it is apparent that there was a statistically significant increase in self-efficacy to broach career conversations in K–12 as a result of the asynchronous, online training. The greatest increase occurred in the Multicultural Competency Skills subscale, with a mean difference change of 1.17 points. The subscale with the least increase, yet still a notable change, occurred with the Therapeutic Process and Alliance Skills with a mean difference change of 0.72. This is understandable, as the TPAS sub-scale pretest mean started high to begin with, and it may be little surprise that practicing school counselors would rate themselves efficacious in counseling attending skills. Overall, participants completing this online training experienced an increase in their self-efficacy to broach career conversations in K–12. Results support our hypothesis on the effectiveness of the training modules.

Discussion

Study results indicated that school counselor self-efficacy increased after completing an online, asynchronous professional training focused on developing an intrapersonal approach to career conversations with K–12 students. This finding is significant as school counselors not only have a historical mandate to be first-line providers of career-focused activities in K–12, but they are also encouraged to utilize career practices reflecting the changing world-of-work, the inclusive construct of career, addressing the need for career-ready skills instead of occupational

selection, and awareness of the impact diversity plays in this process (Hansen, 2000; NCDA, 2011).

Several studies have shown that school counselors need more training to effectively help students develop career goals and skills (Anctil et al., 2012) as well as increased training in postmodern theoretical approaches and career interventions (Osborn & Baggerly, 2004) before placing career development as a priority when working with students at all grade levels. The training provided in this study prioritized connecting postmodern career counseling theories into career conversation approaches for all three intrapersonal domains, potentially affecting school counselor self-efficacy in this domain. The results from this study also reflect a similar study by Sanders et al. (2017), which found that a sample of middle school counselors felt most confident in their therapeutic and alliance skills and least confident in their multicultural competency skills. Additionally, the training utilized in this study focused on layering the career domain through intrapersonal conversations into existing school counselor practice as opposed to adding activities and tasks into their already overtaxed workday serving at schools with high counselor to student ratios, likely increasing their willingness and confidence to integrate the domain into their work.

The use of collaborative discussion posts to integrate new information into multi-tiered counseling approaches relevant to the K–12 environment may contribute to the online modality being just as effective as offline learning (Darabi et al., 2013). This is also significant, as most school counselors tend to work and serve in isolation in their schools. The opportunity for meaningful, relevant, and collaborative professional development can be difficult to access due to financial, time, and geographic barriers. Having access to a completely asynchronous online

training developed specifically for school counselors that focuses on their unique roles within the school seems to help address the challenges they experience in addressing the career domain.

This study representing participants from a sample of school counselors in K-12 settings across the United States suggests that school counselor confidence in the career domain, and particularly in multicultural competency skills within that domain, has the potential to be mitigated by an online training. This study adds to the research surrounding the effectiveness of online professional development, particularly for professionals serving students in K–12 (Smalley, S. et al, 2023; Tzovla, E. et al., 2021). Ultimately, meaningful learning may be achieved through online training, even if it requires a longer time commitment than typical professional development training and workshops.

Limitations

While these findings are promising, the results should be framed within the limitations of the study. Self-efficacy is a self-reported construct, and the pre- and posttest responses represent participant perceptions at that time. It is also possible that participant responses reflect social and professional expectations of where they should be in those domains. This study is not experimental in that it did not create a control group due to time and financial constraints. While the participant completion rate was higher than expected, there were participants who started the study but did not complete it by the study deadline. Their data is not included in this study, so their impact on participating to some degree is unknown. The reach for recruiting participants for this study was limited to those who are connected to a professional association or network in their field. School counselors without connections to these networks likely did not get the opportunity to become aware of and take advantage of the study, which contributes to its

limitation in generalizability. Finally, participants were incentivized to participate and complete the training and study activities, which may have had some effect on the results.

Implications for Future Research

While the development and participation of online training for counseling professionals are not new, there is a dearth of research on its effectiveness, particularly on topics that can be challenging for school counselors to address in their work with students. Considering the challenges school counselors experience in accessing affordable and flexible training on topics geared toward the work they do in schools; this study suggests developing high-quality and relevant online training may be a solution. This study establishes that school counselors benefit from taking an online asynchronous training on the intrapersonal career domain; however, it does not establish whether those school counselors implement that approach into their work with students. It also isn't clear if student engagement or experience in developing their career concepts are affected as a result. Future research exploring those areas could be beneficial. It would also be beneficial to repeat the study using a control and treatment group to further determine the impact of the training on self-efficacy.

This study also has the potential to impact counselor education programs experiencing challenges in implementing a compelling and effective career counseling course. Graduate programs may consider developing or acquiring an online career course reflecting the process and material approach provided in this study. It is unknown whether this impact would be the same for training on topics beyond the career domain, however it does support further study in that space.

Conclusion

This study is the first approach to investigate the efficacy of an online asynchronous training program designed to enhance the effectiveness of school counselors in conducting career conversations with students at all grade levels. Notwithstanding the inherent methodological constraints, the results of the study provide evidence for the efficacy of online training in facilitating ongoing professional development among school counselors. It is our intention that the research undertaken in this study will serve as a catalyst for the emergence of additional research on the outcomes of career counseling training, in parallel with the exploration of other facets of counseling training. The necessity of this measure arises from the growing prevalence of online synchronous and asynchronous training in the field of counselor education, which has experienced a significant increase in popularity in recent years.

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Chapter 3

Developing Professional School Counselors' Competence Broaching Career Conversations

Through an Online Training Course

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Abstract

Professional school counselors are expected to address the career domain in K–12 by ensuring all students have an opportunity to develop the mindsets and behaviors necessary to acquire work-related skills, resilience, perseverance, a desire for lifelong learning, and a positive attitude towards academics, which contribute to a strong work ethic. Addressing the career domain, however, is an area school counselors feel least competent to broach with students, reducing the likelihood the domain is addressed effectively and equitably. The purpose of this study is to investigate the effectiveness of an online asynchronous training program designed to help increase school counselor competence in (a) broaching career conversations with students, (b) connecting the conversations to ASCA, NCDA, and CASEL standards, and (c) identifying diversity, equity, and inclusive (DEI) considerations within the approach. A national sample of school counselor participants (n = 38) serving students at all educational levels completed a pretest and posttest case study response along with a 9-hour online asynchronous training titled, *Career Conversations in K–12: Demystifying the School Counselor Role*. Case study responses were rated by two doctoral-level school counselor educators utilizing a rubric for the three categories. The rating results indicate there was an effect in two categories: (a) broaching career conversations and (b) connecting the conversations to standards. No effect occurred in the DEI category. Based on these results, asynchronous online training in the career domain may serve as an alternative to in-person instruction to increase school counselor competency in broaching career conversations and connecting them to ASCA, NCDA, and CASEL standards.

Keywords: school counselor, career domain, online training, competency, DEI, ASCA standards, NCDA standards, CASEL standards

The term 'career- ready' is consistently connected to the desired type of student K-12 schools hope to produce as a result of strong academic offerings and a comprehensive school counseling program. According to Gysbers (2013), a career-ready student is one who possesses the "... knowledge, skills, and dispositions to visualize and plan their futures" (p.284). Specifically, career-ready students understand their lives occur in many different settings, address multiple roles including learner and worker, and success in these roles throughout the life-span require adaptability and balance. Professional school counselors are expected to play a critical role in helping students develop career readiness through providing career development interventions in schools.

Career development is 1 of 3 domains professional school counselors are encouraged to implement as part of a comprehensive school counseling program (American School Counselor Association [ASCA], 2019a). The professional school counselors' role in addressing career development includes, among other tasks, ensuring all students have the opportunity to develop the mindsets and behaviors necessary to acquire work-related skills, resilience, perseverance, a desire for lifelong learning, and a positive attitude towards academics which contribute to a strong work ethic. Student success in their career is connected to self-efficacy, positive identity, motivation, and perseverance, which are all developmental factors affected by the interventions professional school counselors implement in the schools (ASCA, 2017b; 2019b). Professional school counselors contribute to student career-readiness by holistically implementing the career domain beginning in elementary school and integrating academic and social- emotional interventions through high school (Grimes et al., 2017; Gysbers, 2013). However, research findings seem to indicate that school counselor career development practices in K-12 are not closely aligned with statewide career education efforts to develop career ready students

(McFadden & Curry, 2018). Despite the professional school counselors' historical role to address career development stemming from their beginnings as vocational guidance counselors (Gysbers, 2010) and the continued emphasis ASCA prescribes to that domain for all K-12 grades, this may be the most challenging domain professional school counselors feel equipped to implement.

School Counselor Competency

Competency, generally defined, is a construct assessing an individual's ability to successfully perform a job using knowledge, traits, skills, and capacities that can be improved upon and judged by some level of performance standard in relevant situations (McClelland & Boyatzis, 1980; Shavelson, 2010). In short, competency is one's ability to apply knowledge successfully through a performative assessment as opposed to a display of knowing information assessed via an examination (Shavelson, 2010). Competency contrasts with self-efficacy in that the latter reflects one's beliefs about their ability to perform a task, and the former is assessed through performance of the activity or task either through self-report or by observation (Bandura, 2006; Shavelson, 2010).

In the counseling profession, scales and frameworks have typically been utilized for participants to self-report competency in domains relevant to the profession, including multiculturalism, advocacy, anti-racism, and sexual orientation (Guzman et al., 2013; Rutter et al., 2008; Stickl Haugen et al., 2021; Trusty & Brown, 2005). At the time of this study no self-reporting competency scale addressing the career domain is available. While professional school counselor comfort, experience, perceived competency, and preparation to implement the career domain has been explored in several studies (Bridgeland & Bruce, 2011; Lindo et al., 2019; Morgan et al., 2014; Novakovic et al., 2021), professional school counselor competency to broach career conversations critical to the career domain has not yet been sufficiently addressed.

When understanding professional school counselor readiness and self-perceived competency in addressing the career domain, study results generally reflect a lack of confidence and competence on the topic overall. Morgan et al., (2014) found that participants in their qualitative study felt incompetent and inadequate when approaching and delivering career tasks with students. A separate study found that 60-67% of professional school counselors were at least adequately prepared to address college options, while in contrast only 21-37% were at least adequately prepared to address occupational and work-life topics (Novakovic et al., 2021). In a national survey, only one-third of professional school counselors indicated comfort providing college and career counseling (Bridgeland & Bruce, 2011). Further, research shows that professional school counselors desire more training in using updated and multi-culturally appropriate career theories with students to competently address the career domain (Lindo et al., 2019; Morgan et al., 2014). In Anctil et al.'s (2012) study, 75% of study participants indicated they needed more training to effectively help students develop career goals and skills.

While professional school counselors believe that preparing students with workplace skills and career development competencies is an important element of the secondary school experience (Barker & Satcher, 2000), the lack of preparation and perceived competency to address the career domain appear to have a negative effect on their willingness to prioritize career activities, and their ability to incorporate it into their work with students (Anctil et al., 2012; Li et al., 2017; Osborn & Baggerly, 2004). This study seeks to address a gap in the research by investigating the effects of an online training on professional school counselor competency to broach career conversations with K-12 students using a pre and posttest case study response (Appendix E).

Counselor Training in the Career Domain

When it comes to professional school counselors receiving training in the career domain, there appears to be at worst a potentially nonexistent approach and at best an uneven experience for those who do receive training. Professional school counselors who graduate from counselor education programs accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP, 2016) are required to complete some coursework covering topics relevant to career counseling. However, not all counselor education programs are CACREP accredited; and at the time of this research, no state has a school counseling credentialing requirement requiring CACREP accreditation (ASCA, September 28, 2022). Additionally, not all practicing school counselors in private schools are credentialed. Further, some states provide emergency credentials to individuals without a degree in counseling (Solmonson et al., 2011).

For counselor education programs that include curricular training in career counseling, contextual factors may influence the quality of training. For example, counselor-in-training attitudes towards the career course were found to be affected by institutional decisions surrounding the course, including its placement in the curriculum, faculty language about the topic (e.g., a lack of passion about career counseling), the use of adjuncts to teach the course, and the difficulty of conveying course relevance to counseling practice and programming (Lara et al., 2011; Osborn & Dames, 2013).

The National Career Development Association (NCDA, 2022) offers a professional development training series geared to career service providers in the schools; however, it does require a significant time and money commitment. As the key providers of career focused interventions and information in the K-12 system, professional school counselors are struggling to access relevant training that fits their roles. In an effort to support professional school

counselors to perform tasks in the career domain, NCDA and ASCA collaboratively and separately have provided guidance and resources to assist them in updating their career development practices that reflect the changing world of work, increasingly diverse school and work environments, and evolving career theories (ASCA, 2017b; Hansen, 2000; NCDA, 2011). One significant resource released in 2017(a) was developed by ASCA and the Colorado Department of Education called *Career Conversations to Promote Academic and Career Development.* The materials include standard-aligned, and grade specific questions school counselors can integrate into their work with students and a video webinar providing an overview of the holistic and systemic approach to career that fits into the social-emotional activities currently practiced in schools. However, it is unclear if professional school counselors are accessing this tool to address the career domain with K-12 students. Though research has connected career counselor training, or the lack of it in counselor education programs to professional school counselor lack of preparedness to address the career domain with K-12 students, to date, no studies have examined the effectiveness of professional development training as a mitigator.

Purpose of the Study

This study seeks to examine the effects of an online training course on professional school counselors' competency to broach career conversations in their work with K-12 students; connect ASCA, NCDA, and CASEL standards; and identify diversity, equity, and inclusive (DEI) considerations within the approach. We hypothesized participants who completed the online training would demonstrate increased competency to broach career conversations in K-12 using relevant and developmentally appropriate career conversation questions, connect their approach to relevant ASCA, NCDA, and Collaborative for Academic and Social Emotional

Learning (CASEL, 2022) standards and frameworks, and incorporate any DEI considerations in their approach. The study research questions are:

1. What is the effect of an online training course on professional school counselors' ability to incorporate career conversation interventions with K-12 students?

2. What is the effect of an online training course on professional school counselors' ability to connect their career conversation with ASCA, NCDA, and CASEL standards?

3. What is the effect of an online training course on professional school counselors' ability to consider DEI when working with a student in the career domain?

Method

This study utilized a quasi-experimental, pre and posttest case study response assessment completed by participants. Two independent raters utilized a rubric to review and measure the pre and posttest case study responses for school counselor competency in broaching a career conversation, incorporating appropriate standards, and consideration of DEI. The pre and posttest case study and rubric are provided in Appendix E. A paired sample t-test was performed to compare participant pre and posttest competency scores for career conversations. The McNemar x^2 test was conducted for the pre and posttest inclusion of ASCA, NCDA, CASEL standards, and DEI consideration frequencies. A post hoc power analysis using G* POWER 3.1 (Faul et al., 2009) for a single tail paired t-test for 38 participants with $\alpha = 0.05$, and an effect size of 0.50 calculated the power at 0.91.

Following the study's exemption from review by the Oregon State University Institutional Review Board (Appendix B), participant recruitment began. A 2-page informational flyer containing training and study information was distributed to professional connections to

initiate snowball recruitment (Appendix C). The flyer was also forwarded to school counselor professional associations in all 50 states in the United States. In states where associations refused to share information with their members, recruitment materials were shared with counselor education programs in the hopes they would disseminate it to alumni. The California Association of School Counselors (CASC) advertised the training and study in their bi-weekly Counselor Connection email to all members in early spring. The training and study flyers were also posted on ASCA Scene in early spring and in early summer in 2023.

Participants

Interested participants (*N*=181) completed an interest survey collecting basic information, including name, email address, work title at the school, working status in the prior 12 months, credential/license information, attendance in any career counseling training, and a space for questions by the participant. Nine respondents did not meet the research criteria, which included (a) being credentialed or licensed as a school counselor in their state, (b) working full or part time in that role in the prior 12 months at a public or private elementary, middle, or high school in the United States, (c) possessed at least one year of experience as a school counselor, and (d) not concurrently completing a career counseling course or training. The remaining 172 respondents received an email via Qualtrics with a link to the informed consent, pretest, and demographic survey.

Screened-in participants (*n* = 92) who completed the informed consent, demographic survey, and pretest survey were enrolled as students at the Canvas training site. Training participants were required to complete eight exercises containing an exam, four reflections, and three discussion posts with an overall score of at least 70% before receiving the posttest link. Participants completing the posttest received a $100.00 gift card, and 30 participants also

received nine NBCC continuing education units after completing a training evaluation. Participants mean login time to the training was 12 hours and 58 minutes, with a standard deviation of 6 hours and 25 minutes. All pre- and posttest data and demographic information collected within Qualtrics was coded in a password-protected spreadsheet on a biometrically secure laptop. The training and study deadline was extended for one month, with 38 (41%) participants completing all requirements by the second deadline.

Demographics

The majority of school counselors identified as female (89%) and white (76%). Some participants identified as Asian, Pacific Islander, or native Hawaiian (8%), other (8%), and Black or African American (8%). Of those, 8% also identified as Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish. School counselors represented 16 states, with the majority practicing in Wisconsin ($n = 9$) and California ($n = 8$). Indiana had 3 school counselors; Arkansas, Florida, Michigan, Nevada, and Tennessee each had 2. Connecticut, Iowa, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Ohio, South Carolina, Texas, and Washington each had one participant. School counselors served a range of grade levels: elementary (18%), elementary and middle (8%), middle (21%), middle and high (14%), high (34%), and K12 (5%). Years of experience as a school counselor ranged between 1 and 25 years. 1–5 years: 34%; 6–10 years: 29%; 11–15 years: 8%; 16–20 years: 18%; and 21–25 years: 11%. Most participants ($n = 27$) spent less than 25% of their time on career topics with students; 9 spent less than 50%; and 2 spent up to 75% of their time on career topics. Participants attending CACREP-accredited graduate programs was 60%, with 16% attending a non CACREP-accredited program, and 24% were unsure of their program accreditation. This was the first training in career counseling for 5 participants; 16 received at least one course in career counseling in their graduate program; 15 received at least one course in their graduate program

and attended career-focused workshops at ASCA conferences; and 2 indicated their only training came from career-focused workshops at ASCA conferences. One participant was licensed as Marriage and Family counselor, 2 were Licensed Professional Counselors, and 3 also possessed a National Certified Counselor credential.

Career Conversations in K-12: Demystifying the School Counselor Role

The online asynchronous training course developed for this study allows participants to access course materials and assignments and engage in class discussions at a time and in a space that is more suited to their professional and personal lives. This training also approaches learning from an andragogical framework, as adult learners respond better to instruction that allows them to immediately apply new knowledge to existing expertise (Knowles, 1984). The training implements effective approaches to online, experiential, and andragogical learning by providing varied learning materials (e.g., readings, videos, and websites), quizzes, reflection assignments, and flipped learning experiential activities (Fulton & Gonzalez, 2015) addressing the career domain in K–12 schools. Studies show that online courses allow for more student autonomy because of the self-driven discussion format, which is conducive to experiential and constructivist learning approaches (Bridges & Frazier, 2019). The Quality Matters (QM) rubric, a guide for designing quality online learning environments accessible to all students, was referenced, and adhered to during the development of this training site.

Four learning modules made up the estimated 9-hour training. The first module provided career definitions, including jobs, occupations, careers, and career conversations, as well as an overview of the intrapersonal domain of career problem assessment conceptualized by Dr. Louis A. Busacca (2002), specifically the roles including career counselor, career development, and career adjustment within that domain (Module 1). Each role had a training module (Modules 2-4)

providing relevant information and resources cross-referenced to the CASEL Framework (2022), the National Career Development Association's Guidelines (2007), and the ASCA Student Standards (2021). As part of the learning materials for each of the three modules, there were recordings of lectures and case studies, customized professional conversation starters (ASCA, 2017a) for each grade level, connections to related websites, and instructions for integrating career conversations into the Multi-Tier Systems of Support (MTSS) tiers (Goodman-Scott et al., 2019). Relevant diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) topics were addressed in each role. The content and format of the training modules were validated by seven reviewers with backgrounds in curriculum design, counselor education, professional school counseling, and state career services. Feedback and recommendations were incorporated into the training modules. Appendix A contains a table providing a detailed summary of the entire online training program.

Measures

This study utilized a pretest and posttest case study to collect participant responses (Appendix E). Participants were instructed to read a case study, then describe their approach with the student presented in the case study, identify goals, standards, or competencies relevant to their approach, as well as identify any DEI considerations for the student. This approach assessed the participant's level of performance in applying knowledge to be observed in a mock situation, which remains consistent with competency assessment procedures (Shavelson, 2010).

Perlman (2003) indicates that when developing a rubric, there is no best number for scale points; however, scales should avoid ratings higher than six or seven points and have a number that adequately defines the range from very poor to excellent performance. The rubric developed for this case study assesses participant performance in three categories: (a) broaching a career conversation using an intrapersonal role; (b) ASCA, NCDA, and CASEL standards; and (c) DEI

considerations. The first category provides raters with the following range for assessing participant performance: *Exceeds Competency* (score = 3), *Achieved Competency* (score = 2), and *Approaching Competency* (score = 1). The second and third categories offer two options for rating: *Displays Competency* (score = 1), and *No Display of Competency* (score = 0).

Prior to the study, the case study and rubric were reviewed for relevance and clarity by two professional school counselors and one instructional designer. Participant responses to the pre- and posttest case studies were anonymized and transcribed into two secure Google documents shared with each rater throughout the study period. Access to each document was available only to the rater and the first author. This study utilized data from two independent raters for analysis. Since two categories utilized binary ratings, interrater reliability was assessed using Fleiss' Kappa for all three categories prior to analyzing the participant data (Table 2.1). The two independent raters were doctoral-level counselor educators familiar with the training materials and approach. A pilot case study and rating session was facilitated between the first author and two raters to establish consistency in the use of the rubric ratings. One of the raters was the third author. Ratings were completed a week after the training deadline, and all scores for completing participants were collected into a password-protected database containing coded participant data for analysis.

Table 2.1

Interrater Reliability Results using Fleiss' Kappa

Category	Pretest k	Posttest k
Career Conversations	0.38	0.77
Connecting Standards	0.64	0.94
Considering DEI	0.67	0.66

Note: Confidence level= 0.95

Data Analysis

The data was analyzed for each research question using either a paired *t*-test or a

McNemar x^2 test. Data analysis was conducted using R (2018) statistical software. Due to the

ratings being dichotomous dependent variables between two related groups, a McNemar x^2 test

was utilized to answer Questions 2 and 3: connecting standards and considering DEI. With the

exception of the pretest rating for career conversations, which showed fair agreement amongst

the two raters, all other pretest and posttest categories fell between substantial to almost perfect

agreement.

<div align="center">

Results

</div>

In this study, we hypothesized that participants completing an asynchronous, online

training would demonstrate increased competency to broach career conversations in K12 using

relevant and developmentally appropriate career conversation questions, connect their approach

to relevant ASCA, NCDA, and Collaborative for Academic and Social Emotional Learning

(CASEL, 2022) standards and frameworks, and incorporate any DEI considerations in their

approach.

<u>Research Question 1</u>

A paired sample *t*-test was performed to compare average participant pre- and posttest

scores for broaching career conversations. The pretest and posttest mean (standard deviation)

averaged between the two independent raters was 1.41 (0.59) and 1.96 (0.51), respectively. The

mean difference was 0.55, with a *t*-score of 4.71 and a *p*-value of 3.493e-05. The data indicates

there was a statistically significant increase in competency in broaching career conversations, as

the *p*-value is less than 0.05 (Table 2.2). This supports our hypothesis on the effectiveness of the

training modules on increasing the competence of the participants in broaching career

conversations.

Table 2.2

Results from a One-Tailed Paired t-test: Career Conversations

	Pretest *Mean (SD)*	Posttest *Mean (SD)*	*Mean diff.*	*t- Score*	*p-value*
Rater 1	1.58 (0.79)	1.95 (0.57)	0.37	2.57*	0.01
Rater 2	1.24 (0.49)	1.97 (0.54)	0.74	6.28*	2.642e-07
Total Rater	1.41 (0.59)	1.96 (0.51)	0.55	4.71*	3.493e-05

*Note: N=38. *Significant at p< 0.05*.

Research Question 2

For use of standards in the pre- and posttest case study, Rater 1 identified four

participants who included standards prior to the training and 25 participants who included

ASCA, NCDA, and CASEL standards after completing the training: $x^2(1) =19.05$, $p = 1.275e-05$.

Rater 2 identified two participants using standards prior to the training and 24 after completing

the training: $x^2(1) =20.05$, $p = 7.5562e-06$. The *p*-value is less than .05 for both raters; therefore,

the null hypothesis can be rejected.

Research Question 3

For DEI awareness or consideration when addressing the case study, Rater 1 identified 25

participants addressing DEI prior to the training and 26 participants addressing it after

completing the training: $x^2(1) =0$, $p = 1$. Rater 2 identified 21 participants addressing DEI prior

to the training and 22 after completing the training: $x^2(1) = 0$, $p = 1$. For both raters, the p-value is not less than .05; therefore, the null hypothesis cannot be rejected.

Discussion

Addressing the career domain is one of three key roles school counselors commit to when entering this profession; however, training and practice in this domain are patchy at best (ASCA, 2017b). The current approach to the career domain, typically occurring at the high school level and focusing on occupational or college major selection, does not create adults who are prepared to manage and adapt to the changing world of work (Solberg et al., 2022). The results of the current study suggest that school counselors who receive online training focused on incorporating standards-connected intrapersonal career conversations into their existing practice throughout the K–12 experience instead of having conversations about careers with students may be effective in increasing competency in this domain. Specifically, participants who completed the training displayed a statistically significant increase in competency when broaching a developmentally appropriate career conversation with a student. Participants also displayed a statistically significant increase in competence in connecting relevant ASCA, NCDA, and CASEL standards to the career conversation approach with the student. The area that did not display an increase in competency involved the DEI considerations relevant to the student when conducting the career conversation. This was an interesting outcome of the study, which was the result of a high number of competent pretest ratings in that category. Interestingly, previous studies analyzing the career domain have indicated that school counselors feel least efficacious when approaching multicultural skills within this domain (Perrone et al., 2000; Sanders et al., 2017). In a study by Gavin Williams et al. (2023), several themes were identified that create challenges for rural school counselors in broaching conversations surrounding DEI topics. Two

key factors included strategies for broaching conversations, and support for broaching conversations on race with students. While the training provided awareness of and strategies to address DEI topics within the career conversations, it is possible that the rubric standards for this category did not possess the appropriate rigor for accurately assessing competency in DEI. The competency rating for this category only required the participant to display an awareness of the intersecting identities the student brought to the conversation; however, the counselor considering the impacts of those identities within the career conversation would have been a more appropriate display of competency. With this exception in mind, these study results support the contention that delivering professional development training through an online asynchronous approach can be effective in increasing school counselor competency in the career domain.

These results have the potential to be meaningful for school counselor education programs and organizations serving practicing school counselors as they provide an updated approach to training school counselors in the career domain, both in modality and in content. This study adds to the growing research surrounding the effectiveness of online learning when incorporating appropriate activities, including deep reflections and rigorous flipped-learning discussions. Yet, this training also contained a non-traditional approach to understanding and defining the concept of career and the role it plays in the lives of K–12 students, which has the potential to be more relevant to the changing role school counselors serve in schools. This training shifted the career domain focus away from student occupational exploration, assessments, or imagining or selecting a future career and focused school counselors on an intrapersonal approach focused on exploring meaning, the development of existing and desired roles, and adjustment skills within the student's existing career. This approach allows school counselors to integrate career conversations into their existing efforts addressing the academic

and social/emotional domains while also addressing ASCA, NCDA, and CASEL standards. This approach seems significant and worthy of inclusion in school counselor graduate and professional development training, particularly if it can be achieved through asynchronous online learning.

Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

This study, conducted over a five-month period with the goal of reaching a national school counselor audience and a very limited budget for the training site and participant compensation, is one small attempt to address a complex challenge. Additionally, the outcomes of this quasi-experimental study represent a small cross-section of school counselor backgrounds and are limited in their generalizability. Study outreach was conducted primarily through regional and national school counselor associations, and the participant pool reflects that. This suggests that the study results do not represent school counselors not connected to a school counselor association. While this study did utilize a pre-post design, results were not compared to a control group; therefore, the study results may not be completely attributed to the training. A significant limitation with this study involves the rubric descriptor specific to the DEI category. It is possible the threshold for determining participant competency in addressing DEI included in the rubric was too low, thus preventing any potential growth as a result of the training being assessed. Plausibly, a more fine-tuned rubric on DEI indicators would have been more useful in assessing change in DEI competency.

This study is worthy of being replicated and enhanced with a true experimental design. Including a control group has the potential to determine the true effect of the training on school counselor competence in this domain. It is essential that future studies incorporate a rigorous scaling rubric, particularly in the DEI category, to better capture any effect the training has on

competency as the rubric utilized in this study only assessed participant awareness of DEI in the case study. A rigorous rubric for this category should focus beyond DEI awareness and explore the impact intersecting identities have on a student's career. Had this been initially addressed, it is likely that the pretest competency numbers would have been lower, and the posttest numbers would have captured the number of participants who incorporated a deeper understanding of the impacts, which was the focus of the DEI elements of the training. The results in the DEI category also indicate it would be beneficial to review the DEI materials included in the training and examine whether they need to be revised or enhanced. This study would also benefit from a longer training window with focused efforts on school counselors in one region or large school district as opposed to a national sample. There is value in following up with participants in this training to explore what their experience was like and evaluate the impact the training has on their approach to the career domain.

Conclusion

This study contributes to the limited discussion surrounding school counselor competence in broaching the career domain with students and is different in its focus on testing a potential solution to the challenge. Although the training was impactful in only two areas, career conversations, and connecting relevant standards when broaching career conversations, these results contribute to the conversations surrounding online training efficacy as a mediator to professional development for school counselors. We are encouraged by these results and hope it encourages additional studies addressing additional topics within the counseling profession. Considering online synchronous and asynchronous training is becoming more commonplace within higher education and professional development, it is imperative to continue exploring methods of delivering it effectively.

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Chapter 4

General Conclusions

This chapter provides a summary of the findings and implications of the two dissertation studies on school counselor self-efficacy and competence in broaching career conversations after completing an online training. The studies were constructed out of a need to expand on research on school counselors' self-efficacy and competencies addressing the career domain with students in all grades. Existing studies surrounding this challenge focused on exploring school counselor experiences, preferences, and lack of approaches in this domain, however none make attempts to test out a potential solution utilizing an asynchronous online professional development training. The first study utilized pre-, and posttest modified self-efficacy scales to analyze changes in school counselor self-efficacy in the career domain because of the online training. The second study assessed school counselor competence in broaching career conversations, connecting standards, and DEI awareness using a case study response before and after completing the online training. Both studies used data provided by 38 training participants representing a national sample of K–12 school counselors. Implications and recommendations for future research will be addressed toward the end of this chapter.

Summary of Manuscript 1

The first study, Chapter 2, investigated the effectiveness of an online asynchronous training program designed to help increase school counselor self-efficacy in broaching career conversations in K–12 schools. In early 2023, after the IRB determined the study to be exempt, training and study recruitment with a national outreach to school counselors primarily via regional, state, and national professional association postings began. Close to 200 school counselors completed the screening questionnaire; 92 screened-in participants completed all pre-

training requirements to gain access to the training site; and 38 participants completed the training and posttest within the five-month training window. Self-efficacy data was collected before and after the training using 20 questions from two modified scales: the Career Counseling Self-Efficacy Scale (O'Brien et al., 1997) and the School Counseling Self-Efficacy Scale (Bodenhorn & Skaggs, 2005). Participants self-reported their self-efficacy using a 5-point Likert-type scale, with 1= *not confident* and 5= *highly confident*. The research question guiding this study is: What is the effect of a 9-hour, self-paced, online training course covering career conversations on professional school counselors' self-efficacy in broaching career conversations in K–12 schools?

A post-hoc power analysis for a single-tail paired t-test was conducted for 38 participants with α = 0.05 and an effect size of 0.50, which calculated the power at 0.91. Participants were credentialed or licensed school counselors with at least one year of service in that role; they were primarily female (86%) from 16 states; White (76%) along with Asian, Pacific Islander, or Native Hawaiian (8%); Black or African American (8%); or other (8%). A small group (8%) also identified as Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish. Almost half (47%) served K–8 students. A majority (71%) spent less than a quarter of their time on career topics when working with students.

For this study, internal reliability for the modified self-efficacy scales and two sub-scales exceeded the typical value of 0.70, indicating they were sufficiently consistent. The pretest and posttest mean for each subscale and overall self-efficacy ranged between 3.58 and 3.97 and 4.30 and 4.69, respectively. The mean difference ranged between 0.72 and 1.17. With a *p*-value for each scale of less than 0.05, the data indicates there was a statistically significant increase in participant self-efficacy, likely because of the online asynchronous training. The Multicultural Competency Skills sub-scale displayed the greatest mean score difference (1.17), and the

Therapeutic Process and Alliance Skills sub-scale displayed the least mean score difference (0.72), which reflects other study results exploring school counselor confidence in varying aspects of the career domain. Overall, school counselor's self-efficacy increased by 0.91 points after completing the online training.

Summary of Manuscript 2

The second study, Chapter 3, investigated the effects of the online training on professional school counselors' competency to broach career conversations into their work with K–12 students, connect ASCA, NCDA, and CASEL standards, and identify DEI considerations within their approach. This study occurred concurrently with the study in Chapter 2, using the same participants and pre- and posttest approaches with the addition of a case study response. The 38 participants who completed the training responded to a case study of a student meeting with them in their school counselor role. Participants were asked to address the challenges the students brought into the session and encouraged to include relevant standards and DEI considerations. Participant pre- and posttest case study responses were anonymized and reviewed by two independent doctoral-level counselor educators. The two raters utilized a rubric to rate responses in all three categories: career conversations, standards, and DEI. The career conversation category ratings included: *Exceeds Competency* (score = 3), *Achieved Competency* (score = 2), and *Approaching Competency* (score = 1). The standards and DEI categories included two options for rating: *Displays Competency* (score = 1) and *No Display of Competency* (score = 0). The research questions guiding the study were:

1. What is the effect of an online training course on professional school counselors' ability to incorporate career conversation interventions with K–12 students?

2. What is the effect of an online training course on professional school counselors' ability to connect their career conversations with ASCA, NCDA, and CASEL standards?

3. What is the effect of an online training course on professional school counselors' ability to consider DEI when working with a student in the career domain?

Participant responses to the demographic survey indicate the majority (63%) have up to 10 years of experience as a school counselor. Participants varied in career-focused education, with this training being the first for five of them; 16 completed one course in their graduate program, with 15 completing a course and attending career-focused workshops at ASCA conferences; and two received training at ASCA conference workshops. Additionally, 60% attended CACREP-accredited graduate counseling programs, and 24% were unsure of their program accreditation. Five participants also held additional licenses as either Marriage and Family counselors, Licensed Professional Counselors, or the National Certified Counselor credential.

For this study, interrater reliability was assessed using Fleiss' Kappa for each of the three categories prior to analyzing participant data. Results indicate fair agreement for the pretest career conversation category and substantial to almost perfect agreements for the remaining pre- and posttest categories. The pre- and posttest participant ratings were analyzed using either a paired t-test (career conversations) or a McNemar x^2 test (standards and DEI consideration). For the career conversations category, the overall rating mean difference was 0.55 with a t-score of 4.71 and a p-value of 3.493e-05, indicating the training had an effect on competency in this category. For the use of standards category, the McNemar x^2 test indicated an effect for use of standards with Rater 1: $x^2(1) = 19.05$, $p = 1.275e-05$; and Rater 2: $x^2(1) = 20.05$, $p = 7.5562e-06$. No effect occurred for DEI considerations with both rater statistical outcomes at $x^2(1) = 0$, $p = 1$.

It is possible the rubric description may not have explored appropriate rigor in the DEI considerations for this training, which is a recommended change when continuing research in this area. Ultimately, the data indicate that the online asynchronous training had an impact on school counselor competency in broaching career conversations and applying relevant ASCA, NCDA, and CASEL standards to the approach.

Limitations

While these studies seek to explore a potential alternative to addressing the complex challenge of school counselor self-efficacy and competence to implement the career domain, they are limited in their scope of generalizability. Several limitations need to be considered when interpreting the findings of this study. To begin with, self-efficacy is a self-reported construct, and the scale responses represent participant perceptions at that time. Participant ratings of their self-efficacy are also affected by social and professional expectations of where they may be in those domains. Competency ratings, while somewhat objective with a rubric, reflect raters' expectations of competent approaches to a topic at that point in time. It is also unknown whether participant competency translated to an increase in their approach to the career domain at the school site. This quasi-experimental study did not include a control group and contained a small sample size; while the data show an increase in self-efficacy and competency in some categories, it is unknown to what degree the training had an impact in those areas.

Participant recruitment for both studies was conducted primarily through state and national professional associations, which suggests the final sample of participants may only represent school counselors who are connected to a professional association. School counselors are not required to maintain membership or actively engage with their professional associations, and it is unknown what percentage do. It is also difficult to connect the regional, educational, or

cultural backgrounds of the participants to the results, as this sample represents a very thin cross-section of school counselors nationally. These results are limited to the data collected from participants who became aware of the training and study and who were able to complete all requirements within the short five-month (for some, one-month) training window. Finally, while demographic data shows participants are well represented in several academic and professional domains, participants in the study are primarily female (86%) and White (76%). This disparity in representation of a diverse school counselor sample is concerning, and efforts in future studies to address this should be considered. Overall, this study may not serve as an exhaustive or deep exploration into the effect of online training for school counselors, but it may serve as an introductory model exploring this area.

Implications and Recommendations

These findings have implications for school counselor training at the graduate level and for professional development, particularly through asynchronous online delivery. The study assessing school counselor self-efficacy complements the existing literature identifying self-efficacy as a key factor in school counselors serving students effectively and as a protective role mitigating professional burnout (Bardhoshi & Um, 2021; Schiele et al., 2014). This study provides one potential solution to address the challenges school counselors experience of feeling incompetent in the career domain, which essentially contributes to their lack of willingness to approach it in their work with students (Morgan et al., 2014), by offering an accessible and flexible training alternative. Additionally, the intrapersonal approach to the career domain presented in the training does not reflect the traditional career-focused approach school counselors encounter in their graduate programs or other training. While this study does not

assess the impact the intrapersonal domain contributes to school counselor self-efficacy, it does suggest the approach is valid and worthy of focus in any career training for school counselors.

The study assessing the training's effect on school counselor competency in broaching career conversations, connecting relevant standards, and DEI awareness in their work with students contributes to a space not addressed in the literature. While plenty of content exists emphasizing the need for school counselors to address the career domain along with recommendations of resources to be used in their approach, the resources and training provided generally lack cohesion with the roles school counselors enact in their schools. This study indicates competency in a counseling domain, in this case, career, may be addressed and increased through effective online learning practices.

Addressing the career domain in K–12 is a vital and historically supported role that school counselors should be willing and able to incorporate into their work with students at any age. Attitudes surrounding the career domain stem from counselor-in-training experiences leading up to and including the career counseling course or content during the graduate program (Lara et al., 2010). Training opportunities in the career domain can be financially out of reach, time-consuming, and not relevant for school counselors who desire to increase their knowledge. The findings from these studies call for further development of relevant, effective, and accessible training provided online as a potential solution to this challenge.

Conclusion

These studies provide an initial approach to investigating the impact of an asynchronous online training and contribute to the limited discussion surrounding school counselor self-efficacy and competency in addressing the career domain with students at all grade levels. Given that the studies were limited by their methodological constraints, the results from both provide

evidence that approaching school counselor professional development through online training is a promising alternative to in-person training, which can be difficult for school counselors to access. While these studies add to the conversation, we are hopeful they will encourage more exploration of online modalities and approaches to counselor education, within the career domain as well as academic and social-emotional, which may be more relevant to the school counselor's needs and role.

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Appendix A: Training Framework

Career Conversations in K-12: Demystifying the School Counselor Role

Module	Overview of objectives	Materials	Assessments and estimated time to complete
Pretest	To be completed prior to training.		20 Likert-type questions, and one case study response. 30 minutes
Module 1: Incorporating Career Conversations into the School Counselor Role	Participants will: • Identify definitions relevant to career and how they fit into conversations with students • Distinguish the differences between the interpersonal and intrapersonal domains of career conversations and how focusing on the intrapersonal domain fits into the role of the school counselor • Recognize that career conversations are a simple way to incorporate the career development domain within an ASCA comprehensive school counseling program • Review how the ASCA Mindsets & Behaviors, NCDA standards, and CASEL framework come together when incorporated into career conversations	5 videos; 7 journal articles or documents; 2 websites	Reflection; Quiz 2 hours
Module 2: Career Conversations: Incorporating the Career Counselor Role	Participants will: • Identify the career counselor role and explore career counseling theories and interventions that fit with this role • Review the ASCA, NCDA, and CASEL alignment for this role	5 videos; 10 journal articles	Reflection; *Share Your Work!*

	• Experience a mock counseling session using this role with an elementary and middle school student • Explore the ASCA Career Conversation Starter questions relevant to this role • Recognize the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) perspectives relevant to this role • Demonstrate ways to incorporate a career conversation from the career counselor role into one of the MTSS tiers	or documents; 7 websites	Activity and discussion post 2 hours 50 minutes
Module 3: Career Conversations: Incorporating the Career Development Role	Participants will: • Identify the career development role and explore career development theories and interventions that fit with this role • Review the ASCA, NCDA, and CASEL alignment for this role • Experience a mock counseling session using this role with an elementary and middle school student • Explore the ASCA Career Conversation Starter questions relevant to this role • Recognize the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) perspectives relevant to this role • Demonstrate ways to incorporate a career conversation from the career development role into one of the MTSS tiers	5 videos; 6 journal articles or documents; 3 websites	Reflection; *Share Your Work!* Activity and discussion post 3 hours 15 minutes
Module 4: Career Conversations: Incorporating the Career Adjustment Role	Participants will: • Identify the career adjustment role and explore career adjustment theories and interventions that fit with this role • Review the ASCA, NCDA, and CASEL alignment for this role • Experience a self-case study relevant to this role • Explore the ASCA Career Conversation Starter questions relevant to this role	5 videos; 11 journal articles or documents; 4 websites	Reflection; *Share Your Work!* Activity and discussion post 3 hours

- Recognize the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) perspectives relevant to this role
- Demonstrate incorporating a career conversation from the career adjustment role into one of the MTSS tiers

| Posttest | To be completed at the end of the training. | 20 Likert-type questions, and one case study response. 30 minutes |

Appendix B: Institutional Review Board Decision

Date: February 24, 2023

PI: Kok-Mun Ng

Department: OSU Student, KED - Education Administration

Re: Initial - HE-2022-137

PSC training in career conversations

The Oregon State University Institutional Review Board has rendered the decision below for *PSC training in career conversations*.

Decision: Exempt

Administrative Check-in: February 23, 2028

Category: Category 1. Research, conducted in established or commonly accepted educational settings, that specifically involves normal educational practices that are not likely to adversely impact students' opportunity to learn required educational content or the assessment of educators who provide instruction. This includes most research on regular and special education instructional strategies, and research on the effectiveness of or the comparison among instructional techniques, curricula, or classroom management methods.

The above referenced study was acknowledged by the OSU Human Research Protections Program. The HRPP has determined that the activities qualify under the exempt category noted above. The Principal Investigator is responsible for ensuring compliance with any additional applicable laws, University or site-specific policies, and sponsor requirements.

The recruitment, consent, parental permission, and/or assent process and associated materials, if submitted with this application, were not reviewed as part of the determination that this study is exempt.

Principal Investigator responsibilities:

- *Researchers are obligated to ensure participants are well informed about the study, and that effective, voluntary consent is obtained, when applicable. While exempt projects are not held to the regulatory requirements, researchers are expected to uphold the ethical principles of Respect for Persons (Autonomy), Beneficence, and Justice from the Belmont Report. Please review this guidance if you would like to see template Consent forms and sample language.*
- *Keep study team members informed of the status of the research and ensure they follow the study plan as described in the application.*
- *Submit project revisions prior to implementing changes to the protocol. Refer to the HRPP website (Project Revision Guidance) for a list of revisions to exempt studies that do not require prior review.*

Report all unanticipated problems involving risks to participants or others within three calendar days.

Sincerely,

Oregon State University Institutional Review Board

Appendix C: Study Recruitment and Training Flyer

CAREER CONVERSATIONS IN K-12: DEMYSTIFYING THE SCHOOL COUNSELOR ROLE

Principal Investigator: Dr. Kok-Mun Ng
Co-Principal Investigator/ Study Contact: Christina Rogers

The purpose of this research study is to examine the effects of an online, asynchronous professional development training on professional school counselor self-efficacy and competence in broaching career conversations in K-12.

To qualify for this study, you must:
- Be credentialed (non-emergency) or licensed in your state as a school counselor, and have at least 1 year of experience as a school counselor.
- Currently work (part or full-time), or worked in the last 12 months, as a school counselor serving K-12 students at a public or private school based in the US.
- Not currently completing a course or training in career counseling.

See additional flyer summarizing the training focus and approach.

Contact Christina at: rogerchr@oregonstate.edu; 916-833-6156

Study begins: March 1, 2023.
Expected end date: August 1, 2023.

Interested in participating?
Fill out the interest survey

STUDY DETAILS

- **Estimated time to complete the training and study activities:** 10 hours.
- **Free to participate,** first 50 participants to complete the full training, pretest, & posttest surveys will receive a $100 gift card
- Earn **9 NBCC** CEU's
- This training is part of a study connected to a Ph.D. dissertation research project.

YOUR TRAINER

Christina Rogers is a doctoral candidate in Counselor Education and Supervision at Oregon State University. She is a professional school counselor and private practice career counselor based in California. Her professional background includes adjunct graduate counseling instructor, curriculum developer, and career development trainer for agencies and organizations around the United States and Canada.

CAREER CONVERSATIONS IN K-12: DEMYSTIFYING THE SCHOOL COUNSELOR ROLE

The goal of this training is to provide professional school counselors with an alternate way to incorporate the career development domain into their work with students. The information and resources this training provides enhance the way elementary, middle, and high school counselors serve students through the use of career conversations. Career conversations move the focus away from choosing an occupation and towards the development of career self-management skills students will need throughout their life-span. When you incorporate career conversations into your work with students at all grade levels, students will be better prepared to explore potential educational and occupational options in high school and develop a meaningful decision-making process that works for them.

All of the information and materials provided in this training incorporate ASCA, NCDA, and CASEL standards for approaching the career domain as well as provide ideas and opportunities for incorporating the practices into all three tiers of the Multi-Tier Systems of Support (MTSS).

rogerchr@oregonstate.edu   916-833-6156

This training is approved for **9 CEU's from NBCC** through Oregon State University.

Study begins: March 1, 2023.
Training end date: August 1, 2023.

Interested in being a participant?
Fill out the interest survey

TRAINING DETAILS

- **Online & asynchronous:** self-paced with no person to person meetings.
- **Estimated time to complete the full course:** 9 hours.
- Free to participate.
- Earn **9 NBCC** CEU's

YOUR TRAINER

Christina Rogers is a doctoral candidate in Counselor Education and Supervision at Oregon State University. She is a professional school counselor and private practice career counselor based in California. Her professional background includes adjunct graduate counseling instructor, curriculum developer, and career development trainer for agencies and organizations around the United States and Canada.

Appendix D: Informed Consent, Pre/Posttest items, and Demographic Survey

Informed Consent

Developing Professional School Counselor Self-Efficacy and Competence to Broach Career

Conversations in K-12 Through an Online Professional Development Training

<u>Principal Investigator:</u> Dr. Kok-Mun Ng; Professor, Counselor Education and Supervision

<u>Study team:</u> Christina Rogers, Doctoral Candidate, Counselor Education and Supervision; & Dr.

Abraham Cazares-Cervantes, Assistant Professor, Counselor Education and Supervision

We are inviting you to take part in a research study. We greatly appreciate your consideration.

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to investigate the effectiveness of an online asynchronous

training program designed to help increase professional school counselor self-efficacy and

competence in broaching career conversations in K-12 schools.

We are asking you to participate in this study because you:

(a) identify as a professional school counselor working full or part-time in the past 12 months at

a public or private K-12 school,

(b) provide school counseling services online or in-person,

(c) have at least one year of experience as a licensed or credentialed (non-emergency)

professional school counselor, and

(d) work at a school within the United States.

And, you should not participate in this study if you are in the process of completing any other

training or full course in career counseling.

Voluntary: Your participation in the study is entirely voluntary. If you decide to be in the study,

you are free to stop at any time without penalty. We may keep and use demographic and training

assessment information that we collected about you while you were in the study unless you ask

for that information to be destroyed.

Activities: Before accessing the asynchronous training site and materials, you will be asked to

consent to participate in this study and complete a pretest and demographics survey. Consenting

to participate electronically indicates your consent and eligibility for the study. After providing

consent to participate, you will be directed to a pretest survey containing 20 Likert-type

questions adapted from the School Counselor Self-Efficacy Scale and the Career Counseling

Self-Efficacy Scale, a brief case study activity, and a brief demographic survey.

You will be provided access to the training site when you have completed the pretest and

demographic survey. The training site contains learning materials and activities relevant to the

study. Assessment activities consist of 1 quiz, 4 reflection responses, and 3 case study discussion

posts. Once all 8 assessment activities are completed, you will be provided with a personal link

to a posttest survey containing 20 Likert-type questions adapted from the School Counselor Self-

Efficacy Scale and the Career Counseling Self-Efficacy Scale, and a brief case study activity.

Completion of the posttest is the final task in the study.

Time: Your participation in this study and training is estimated to take about 10 hours,

completed at your own pace and as your schedule allows. The deadline to complete the full

training is 8 weeks from the date you are given access, or July 1, 2023, whichever occurs last.

Should you need additional time beyond this deadline, please let us know by contacting Christina

Rogers (rogerchr@oregonstate.edu).

Risks: The possible risks or discomforts associated with being in the study include a level of

dissonance associated with being presented with material that may challenge how you understand and apply the career domain in your work with students.

Benefit: We do not know if you will benefit from being in this study. However, you will be provided with information and activities that may affect how you approach your role as a professional school counselor.

Confidentiality: Your participation in the training /study and the information you provide in the pre and posttests, case study activity and demographic survey will be kept confidential and deleted in compliance with IRB requirements. This information will be collected in a Qualtrics survey not embedded within the training modules hosted in Canvas, an online learning management platform. Within the training site on Canvas your personal identifiable information may be anonymized using a pseudonym; however, as a participant you may choose to share your likeness via photo or video and/or name with other training participants at any time during the training. Participants who choose to receive the 9 NBCC CEUs at the end of the training agree to have their name shared with the coordinator in order to receive their certificate. All assessment responses within the training site are kept confidential, EXCEPT the three Share Your Work! case study discussion posts which will be visible to other training participants as part of the learning process.

Payment: The first 50 participants who complete the requirements will receive a $100.00 gift card. Completion requirements include: completion of all training activities including the pre and posttest surveys and case study activities completed within the study research period (current tentative date for study completion: July 1, 2023).

All participants who wish to receive 9 NBCC CEU's for completing the full training will need to indicate their wishes and complete a short, post-training evaluation.

Study contacts: We would like you to feel free to ask us questions if there is anything about the study that you need clarification, including navigating Canvas sites/pages. You can call us at: 916-833-6156 (Christina Rogers); or 541-737-3741 (Dr. Kok-Mun Ng). You may email us at: rogerchr@oregonstate.edu; or ngk@oregonstate.edu. You can also contact the Human Research Protection Program with any concerns that you have about your rights or welfare as a study participant. This office can be reached at (541) 737-8008 or by email at IRB@oregonstate.edu

Do you consent to participate in this research study?

Career Counseling Self-Efficacy Scale- Modified (O'Brien et al., 1997)

Indicate your confidence in your current ability to perform this activity according to a scale of 1 being Not Confident to 5 being Highly Confident. Please answer based on how you feel now, not on your anticipated (or previous) ability:

Not Confident		Moderately Confident		Highly Confident
1	2	3	4	5

CC1. Provide support for a counselee's implementation of their career goals.

CC2. Assist a counselee in understanding how their non-work life (e.g., family leisure, interests, etc.) affects career decisions.

CC3. Understand special issues related to gender in career decision-making.

CC4. Develop a therapeutic relationship with a career counselee.

CC5. Understand special issues related to ethnicity in the workplace.

CC6. Understand the special issues that LGBTQIA+ counselees may have in career decision-making.

CC7. Assist the career counselee in modulating feelings about the career decision-making process.

CC8. Apply knowledge about current ethical and legal issues which may affect the career counseling process.

CC9. Understand special issues present for LGBTQIA+ counselees in the school and workplace.

CC10. Communicate unconditional acceptance to a counselee.

CC11. Understand special issues related to gender in the school and workplace.

CC12. Understand special issues related to ethnicity in career decision-making.

CC13. Listen carefully to concerns presented by a career counselee.

CC14. Synthesize information about self and career so that a career counselee's problems seem

understandable.

CC15. Help a career counselee identify internal and external barriers that might interfere with

reaching their career goals.

School Counselor Self-Efficacy Scale- Modified (Bodenhorn, 2004)

Indicate your confidence in your current ability to perform this activity according to a scale of 1

being Not Confident to 5 being Highly Confident. Please answer based on one current school,

and based on how you feel now, not on your anticipated (or previous) ability or school(s).

Remember, this is not a test and there are no right answers:

Not Confident	Slightly Confident	Moderately Confident	Generally Confident	Highly Confident
1	2	3	4	5

SC1. Teach students how to apply time and task management skills.

SC2. Foster understanding of the relationship between learning and work.

SC3. Deliver age-appropriate programs through which students acquire the skills needed to

investigate the world of work.

SC4. Implement a program which enables all students to make informed career decisions.

SC5. Teach students to apply problem-solving skills toward their academic, personal and career

success.

Demographic Survey

This information is used for research purposes only and will be aggregated with all other participant responses. Only the study researchers will have access to this information within Qualtrics. Your responses will be kept anonymous and secure. The information will not be used for a discriminatory purpose.

D1. Gender identity:

| Male | Female | Non-binary/ third gender | Prefer not to say | Additional gender category/ identity not listed |

D2. Age range:

20-25   26-30   31-35   36-40   41-45   46-50   51-55   56-60   61-65   66+

D3. Number of years' experience working as a professional school counselor (part and full time):

1-5   6-10   11-15   16-20   21-25   26+

D4. State you are currently credentialed/licensed as a professional school counselor:

D5. Indicate any additional credentials or licenses you possess beyond the school counseling

credential (check all that apply):

| Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC, LPCC) | Marriage, Family, Child Therapist (MFT, MFCT) | National Certified Counselor (NCC) | National Certified School Counselor (NCSC) | NCDA Certification | None of these |

D6. Grades you currently serve, or most recently served as a professional school counselor:

D7. Thinking of your most recent role as a professional school counselor, what percentage of

time do you spend on career focused activities within your school?

Less than 25%   26-50%   51-75%   More than 75%

D8. Was the graduate counseling program you received your master's in counseling from

accredited by CACREP at the time you were enrolled?

Yes   No   I don't know

D9. Indicate your career counseling training experience (choose all that apply):

Completed one or more graduate courses in career counseling	Completed an NCDA training: Facilitating career development	Completed an NCDA training: School career development advisor	Attended a career focused workshop at an ASCA or other counseling conference	This is my first training course on career counseling

Ethnicity 1. Are you of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin?

Yes   No

Ethnicity 2. How would you describe yourself? Please select all that apply.

White   Black or African American   American Indian or Alaska native

Asian   Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander   Other

Appendix E: Pre and Posttest Competency Case Study and Rubric

Case Study

This training is focused on incorporating career conversations into your work with K-12 students. Below is a brief case study of a student who has come to you, their professional school counselor for help. Read through the case study and describe/identify questions you would ask and any tools you would use with this student. Are there any special considerations (diversity, equity, inclusion) to keep in mind with this case? You may also choose to identify any goals, standards, or competencies (ASCA, NCDA, CASEL, or your district) relevant to your approach. Your response will be used for research purposes only. There is no right or wrong answer to this case study. There is no word minimum or maximum, however a comprehensive and clear response is appreciated. Please spend only about 10 minutes on this case.

Benji

Grade: 6th-9th (choose the grade level you feel most comfortable working with)

Pronouns: She/Her with family; They/Their to friends and at school (occurred in the last year)

Benji is the youngest of four children. All of their siblings excel academically. Their parents are immigrants and are very involved in their children's academic and social lives. Benji has a strong relationship with many of their teachers on campus and a small social group. Benji recently shared their excitement about potentially joining the Manga Club on campus since they have an interest in digital art and gaming. Their parents are resistant to this interest because it will get in the way of their required after-school activities involving sports, music lessons, and college-prep tutoring. Their parents feel

anime, manga, and gaming are activities for other kinds of students. Benji is hoping they

can drop the sports activities since they have not experienced achievement or growth in

them over the past 6 years. They are finding more social acceptance and friends through

gaming than they do in traditional team sports. Benji is feeling confused and wondering

what to do.

Rubric

Category	Ratings		
	Exceeds competency 3	**Achieved competency 2**	**Approaching competency 1**
1. Broaching a career conversation using an intrapersonal role	The response provides a clear approach to broaching a career conversation using an intrapersonal role using several relevant and developmentally appropriate career conversation questions or tasks.	The response addresses an intrapersonal approach using 2 relevant and developmentally appropriate career conversation questions or tasks.	The response addresses an intrapersonal approach using 1 relevant and developmentally appropriate career conversation question or task.
	Displays competency 1	**No display of competency 0**	
2. ASCA, NCDA, CASEL standards	Identifies at least 1 ASCA, NCDA, or CASEL goal or competency relevant to the case study.	Does not identify an ASCA, NCDA, or CASEL goal or competency relevant to the case study.	
3. DEI considerations	Identifies potential intersecting identity and environmental challenges	Does not identify any potential intersecting identity and environmental challenges	

Appendix F: Self-Efficacy Item Data

Table F

Results from a One-Tailed Paired T-Test: Self-Efficacy Questions

Scale Item	mean diff.	t- Score	p-value
Career Counseling Self-Efficacy Scale- Modified			
CC1. Provide support for a counselee's implementation of their career goals.	0.89	6.17*	3.711e-07
CC2. Assist a counselee in understanding how their non-work life (e.g., family leisure, interests, etc.) affects career decisions.	0.97	6.00*	6.185e-07
CC3. Understand special issues related to gender in career decision-making.	1.18	6.72*	6.789e-08
CC4. Develop a therapeutic relationship with a career counselee.	0.74	5.28*	5.898e-06
CC5. Understand special issues related to ethnicity in the workplace.	1.24	6.77*	5.675e-08
CC6. Understand the special issues that LGBTQIA+ counselees may have in career decision-making.	1.37	6.93*	3.528e-08
CC7. Assist the career counselee in modulating feelings about the career decision-making process.	0.89	4.35*	0.00
CC8. Apply knowledge about current ethical and legal issues which may affect the career counseling process.	1.18	6.72*	6.789e-08

CC9.	Understand special issues present for LGBTQIA+ counselees in the school and workplace.	1.21	7.15*	1.798e-08
CC10.	Communicate unconditional acceptance to a counselee.	0.37	3.56*	0.00
CC11.	Understand special issues related to gender in the school and workplace.	0.97	4.92*	1.783e-05
CC12.	Understand special issues related to ethnicity in career decision-making.	1.03	6.43*	1.644e-07
CC13.	Listen carefully to concerns presented by a career counselee.	0.21	2.74*	0.00
CC14.	Synthesize information about self and career so that a career counselee's problems seem understandable.	0.79	5.56*	2.453e-06
CC15.	Help a career counselee identify internal and external barriers that might interfere with reaching their career goals.	0.92	6.68*	7.692e-08

School Counseling Self-Efficacy Scale- Modified

SC1.	Teach students how to apply time and task management skills.	0.71	4.45*	7.559e-05
SC2.	Foster understanding of the relationship between learning and work.	0.82	5.61*	2.106e-06

SC3.	Deliver age-appropriate programs through which students acquire the skills needed to investigate the world of work.	0.79	4.55*	5.599e-05
SC4.	Implement a program which enables all students to make informed career decisions.	0.97	5.70*	1.582e-06
SC5.	Teach students to apply problem-solving skills toward their academic, personal and career success.	0.87	5.73*	1.477e-06

*Note: N=38. *Significant at p< 0.05.*