Counselor Education Program Philosophy

The Counselor Education Program at IPFW adheres to the scientist-practitioner model of training. Consistent with this approach is our goal of graduating students who have knowledge of counseling, who are competent in providing professional services, and who have the skills necessary to conduct research. Especially important to the program faculty is the commitment to mental health (vs. pathology) and the value attached to understanding the common developmental themes occurring throughout a person’s life. The diversity characterizing the faculty’s theoretical orientation is an advantage to the program. We provide creative students with a variety of theoretical models as well as different applied settings for gaining training experience.

Students are given strong encouragement to participate in professional organizations and create original projects. Each student will declare an area of specialization: Couple and Family Counseling or school counseling. By focusing research activities and applied practicum experiences in the student’s area of greatest interest, the three components--knowledge, practice, and research--become integrated.

Not only do faculty work closely with students in conducting projects and presentations at professional meetings, they also arrange direct observation and supervision of practica with clients. In working with clients, students adhere to the ethical standards of the American Counseling Association and the American Association for Marriage & Family Therapy. Mechanisms for student evaluations of practice include progress evaluations by faculty, the students’ portfolios of accomplishments, audio/videotapes, and reports from internship supervisors. Internship supervisors rate the participants’ clinical skills, and this feedback is available to students.