

ACES CONFERENCE

October 8-12, 2025

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Human Sexuality as a Core Component in Counselor Education

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Why are we discussing human sexuality in counselor education?

- Few programs include human sexuality.
- There are no specific guidelines.
- Nationwide guidelines should be considered.
- Human sexuality effects life satisfaction.

Why is human sexuality important for counselor education?

- Sexual satisfaction is a determiner of life satisfaction.
- Counselor must be equipped
- Counselors need not be embarrassed
- Counselors need confidence
- Counselors should be holistic

Stephenson & Meston (2013)





Why is human sexuality important for counselor education?

- Few programs teach human sexuality.
- Add human sexuality as a core component
- Spur the field to action

Mollen et al. (2020)

Sanabria & Murray (2018)

Human Sexuality Effects on Relationship Satisfaction

- Prominently
- Sexual Boredom
- Lack of Stimulation
- Sexual Novelty
- Therapy Helps



Human Sexuality Effects on Individual Satisfaction

- Sexual Distress
- Unlocking Life Satisfaction
- Crucial Topic
- Missed Opportunities
- Supplemental Training

Stephenson & Meston (2013)

Human Sexuality is Lacking in Counselor Education

- Sex Positivity
- Sexual Health
- Self-Efficacy
- Continuing Education
- Counselor Education Programs
- Additional Articles Needed
- Inflating the Taboo

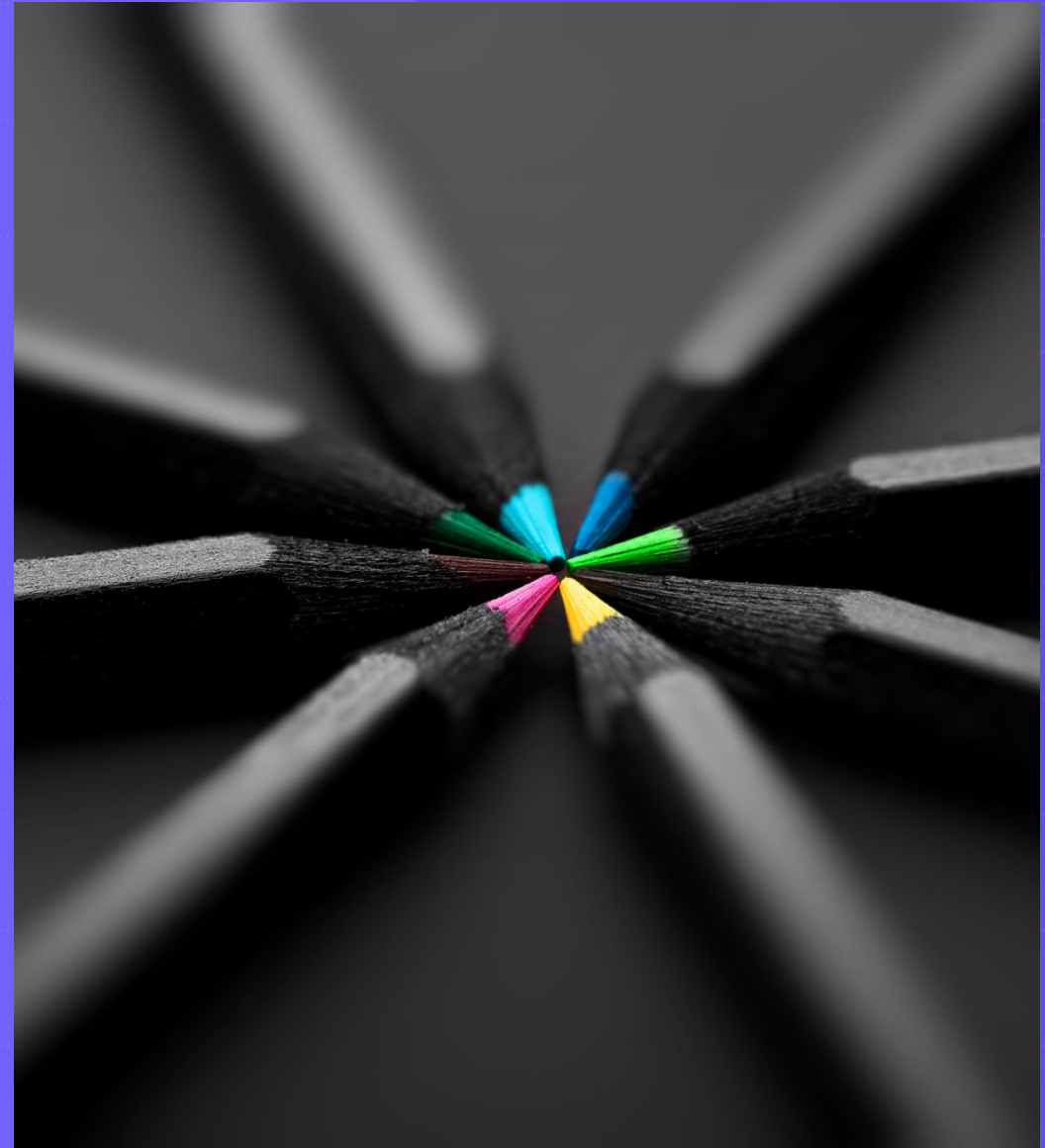


Cruz et al. (2017); Miller and Byers (2008);
Miller and Byers (2009); Dermer & Bachenberg (2015);
Mollen (2020); Zeglin (2017); Sanabria & Murray (2018)

CACREP 2024 3.B & C

- 3.B.2 attitudes values, beliefs, worldview
- 3.B.5 effects on stereotypes
- 3.B.6 socio-cultural influence and cultural values
- 3.B.9 identifying and eliminating barriers
- 3.B.11 role of religion and spirituality

- 3.C.9 the role of sexual development and sexuality related to overall wellness.



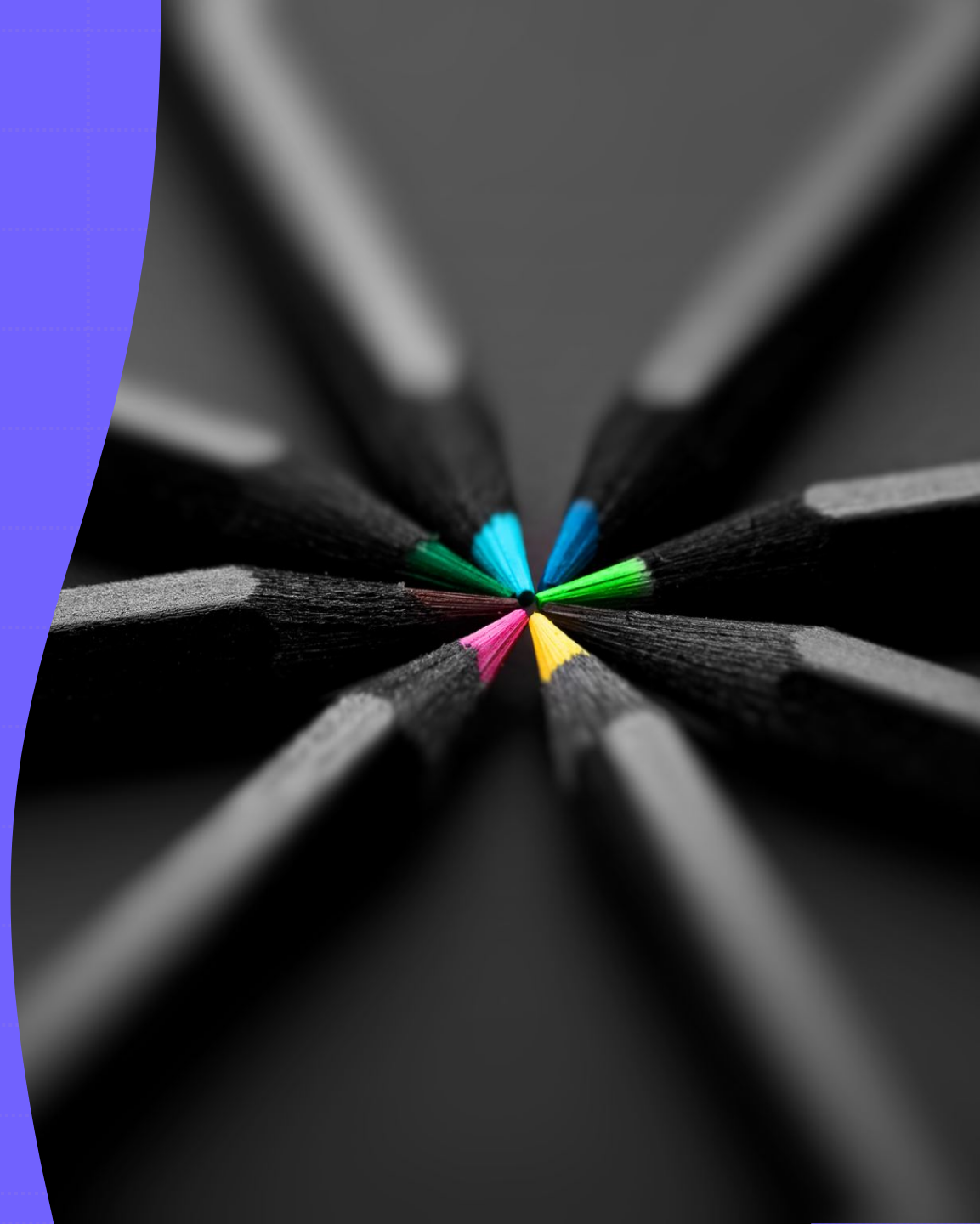
ACA Ethics 2014

- Section C Introduction, Counselors Aspire to:
 - open, honest, and accurate communication in dealing with the public and other professionals
 - practice within the boundaries of professional and personal competence
 - advocate and promote change for individuals that improves quality of life
 - engage in counseling practice that are based on rigorous research methodologies



ACA Ethics 2014

- Section C, Counselors Aspire to:
- C.2.a. Counselors only practice where they have been trained and are well prepared to benefit their clients



Human Sexuality is Encountered in Many Ways



- Exposure to Human Sexuality
 - Positive and Negative
 - misinformation; risky behaviors
 - sexual trauma
 - sexual fetishes
 - boredom
 - sexual dysfunction
 - orgasm or lack of orgasm
 - lack of desire or hyper desire
 - control issues
 - sexually transmitted diseases
 - sexual compulsion
 - values based concerns

Nield et al. (2015); Mukhlisiana et al. (2024);
Interiano-Shiverdecker et al. (2023)

Zeglin et al. (2017) Proposed Human Sexuality Counseling Competency Domains



Zeglin, R. J., Van Dam, D., & Hergenrather, K. C. (2017). An introduction to proposed human sexuality counseling competencies. *International Journal for the Advancement of Counselling*, 40(2), 105-121. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10447-017-9314-y>

- (a) ethical/professional behavior
- (b) history and systems
- (c) anatomy/physiology,
- (d) sexual identity
- (e) sexual development
- (f) intimacy and interpersonal relationships
- (g) pleasure and sexual lifestyles
- (h) sexual functioning
- (i) health/medical factors
- (j) sexual exploitation

Human Sexuality as a Core Component in Counselor Education [Rapping Up]

- Experienced Throughout the Lifespan
- Ample Opportunity to be Exposed
- A Balanced Approach
- Not Ashamed or Embarrassed



Human Sexuality as a Core Component in Counselor Education [Rapping Up]

- More Research Needed
 - Find modalities that best move clients towards their preferred future desires
 - Better understand when to refer
- Equipped to Help
- More Than
 - “a topic”
 - “a single class”



Sanabria & Murray (2018)

Human Sexuality in Counselor Education

What should the response be as a profession and as individuals to the information presented?



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