STATEMENT OF TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

**Andrea M. Garraway**

**MA, CCSI, LCAS, LPC, ICAADC, CSAPCR**

Presently a staff/ instructor of Education at Barber-Scotia College, a Licensed Professional Counselor and a Preventionist in the state of North Carolina, my perspective on teaching has been strongly influenced by my interactions with outstanding professionals at both my post-graduate counseling psychology department at Bowie State University of Bowie, Maryland where I obtained my M.A. degree, and in the large and diverse graduate research program in Counselor Education and Supervision at Liberty University, where I am finishing my PhD. My experiences have formed an approach to teaching that efficiently and meaningfully transmits information to the students which incorporates classroom lectures, peer to peer interactions, innovative experiments, challenging problem-solving projects, group work and study, and including a wealth of real-world examples of the principles being discussed for enhanced learning activities inside and outside of the classroom.

My teaching philosophy is cyclical: You cannot be a prodigious teacher without first striving to be a boundless learner, and you cannot be a prodigious learner without a willingness to teach boundlessly. It is with this view in mind, I enumerate, teaching, research, and public service as the core notions behind my teaching values. As a counselor educator, I integrate the Conceptual Level Theory, Deliberate Psychological Development (DPD) and Cognitive Development Theory, as evidence-based backing, for my teaching philosophy and world view.

I believe my role is to enhance student’s psychological and cognitive development through facilitating independent critical thinking, creativity, collaborative risk taking, and student empowerment.

It is important to me that all students are afforded an equal opportunity to learn despite their social, economic or religious background. In order to ensure that all students are given the same opportunities for learning, a performance assessment and information gathering exercise are conducted. These evaluations are strategically placed in the beginning of the course and structured throughout, for on-going appraisal, specific to the learning outcomes, set-forth by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) standards. The comprised information helps me understand students from a broader context and identify students who may need a structured learning environment and those who may not. Although the curriculum is mostly standard the instructional approach to the learning material does not have a one-size-fits-all methodology but is tailored to that semester’s group of students based on their cognitive abilities and skills. Thus, I encourage students’ freedom of choice for learning goals, content and process. Grounded with the information gathered, a conceptual shift occurs to provide structure to the volume of information, turning the curriculum’s material into a comprehensive, integrated, and meaningful format that leads to a prodigious learning experience.

Throughout this process, I believe it is my duty to model professionalism and offer guidance to students on their journey into the counseling profession. I demonstrate, and expect from students, ethical behavior by adhering to the ethical guidelines as outlined by the American Counseling Association and all other state licensure governing boards of which the students reside.

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In closing, I model authenticity in personal and professional encounters. In doing this, I focus on establishing an environment conducive for learning, assessing and identifying students’ learning needs. As the educator and stakeholder, I seek to cultivate approachability and accessibility crucial to developing an environment that emphasizes knowledgeable discussions about current counselor education theories, the formulation of future research and the development of student’s capabilities for public service, to complete the cycle in my teaching philosophy.