

A Conceptual Model of Preparing School Counseling Students as Related Service Providers in the Transition Process

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Abstract : Data indicate that counselor education programs in the United States do not prepare their students adequately to serve students with disabilities nor provide counseling as a related service. There is a need to train more school counselors to provide related services to students with disabilities, for many reasons, but specifically, school counselors are participating in Individualized Education Programs (IEP) and transition planning meetings for students with disabilities where important academic, mental health and post-secondary education decisions are made. While school counselors input is perceived very important to the process, they may not have the knowledge or training in this area to feel confident in offering required input in these meetings. Using a conceptual research design, a model that can be used to prepare school counseling students as related service providers and effective supports to address transition for students with disabilities was developed as a component of this research. The authors developed the Collaborative Model of Preparing School Counseling Students as Related Service Providers to Students with Disabilities, based on a conceptual framework that involves an integration of Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) and evidenced-based practices based on Self-Determination Theory (SDT) to provide related and transition services and planning with students with disabilities. The authors' conclude that with five overarching competencies, (1) knowledge and understanding of disabilities, (2) knowledge and expertise in group counseling to students with disabilities, (3), knowledge and experience in specific related service components, (4) knowledge and experience in evidence-based counseling interventions, (5) knowledge and experiencing in evidenced-based transition and career planning services, that school counselors can enter the field with the necessary expertise to adequately serve all students. Other examples and strategies are suggested, and recommendations for preparation programs seeking to integrate a model to prepare school counselors to implement evidenced-based transition strategies in supporting students with disabilities are included

Keywords : transition education, social cognitive career theory, self-determination, counseling

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