**Counselor Dispositional Expectations**

Dispositions are the values, commitments, and professional ethics that influence behaviors toward others, and, if sincerely held, dispositions lead to actions and patterns of professional conduct. The Grand Canyon University Counseling Program’s dispositions adhere to the University’s mission statement, as well as to the established counseling profession codes of ethics.

The Grand Canyon University Counseling Program have adopted the following dispositions for its students derived from the American Counseling Association (ACA) Code of Ethics. Although these dispositions are not all inclusive, they do represent values and qualities that are warranted by counseling students. **Students who fail to adhere to or demonstrate such dispositions may be subject to disciplinary actions.**

* **Psychological Fitness:** Counselors\* are aware and assess their motives for pursuing the counseling profession. They are aware of their unfinished emotional and/or mental health issues, and resolve them before starting to provide counseling services to others. Counselors engage in self-care and seek resolutions to issues that arise during their practice. Counselors adhere to the American Counseling Association (ACA) Code of Ethics and/or the NAADAC, the Association for Addiction Professionals Code of Ethics.
* **Self-Awareness:** Counselors are aware of their personal moral, ethical, and value systems and provide counseling services with objectivity, justice, fidelity, veracity, and benevolence. Counselors are acutely aware of their personal limitations in providing services, and are willing to refer clients to another provider when necessary.
* **Cultural Diversity:** Counselors respect, engage, honor, and embrace diversity and a multicultural approach that supports the worth, dignity, potential, and uniqueness of people within their social and cultural context. Counselors promote self-advocacy and assist clients in advocating for empowerment within their cultural context.
* **Acceptance:** Counselors foster a healthy climate of change by providing and promoting acceptance, and a nonjudgmental environment during the therapeutic process. They understand their personal value system and do not impose their values, attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors on their clients.
* **Empathy:** Counselors foster understanding, compassion, and avoid any actions that can cause harm to a client. Counselors treat others with dignity and respect.
* **Genuineness:** Counselors deal truthfully with themselves and their clients, in order to avoid harming their clients.
* **Flexibility:** Counselors practice a client-centered approach, and align treatment to the client’s goals for therapy.
* **Patience:** Counselors understand the therapeutic process and respect client’s efforts to gain control over their lives. Counselors encourage an environment that promotes self-empowerment and allows client’s voice in the therapeutic process.
* **Amiability:** Counselors do not support or engage in any act of discrimination against a prospective, current, or former client. Counselors promote and practice social justice and do not exploit others in their professional relationships.
* **Professional Identity:** Counselors adhere to regulatory state boards and nationally recognized codes of ethics. Counselors practice only within their scope and competencies. They seek to utilize best practices and empirically supported treatments. Counselors stay current with the counseling profession through seeking continuing education, and by supporting counseling associations.

***\* The term counselor is used to refer to counselors in training at the graduate level.***

American Counseling Association (2014). ACA Code of Ethics. Alexandria, VA: Author.

Walz, G. R., & Bleuer, J. C. (2010). Counselor dispositions: An added dimension for admission decisions. *Vistas Online publication, 1*, 11-11.