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From the Editors

This issue marks the end of our tenure as co-editors of Human Service Education. Since 1995, we have strived to publish manuscripts that advance human service education as well as reflect the generalist nature of human services. We hope we have been successful. If we have, then it is in large part due to the energy and efforts of the journal’s editorial board, and we want to recognize their contributions. These colleagues have been diligent in fulfilling their responsibilities as members of the board: Deborah Anderson, Miriam Clubok, Sandra Haynes, Mark Homan, Jill Jurgens, Pam Kiser, Patrick Morrissette, Edward Neukrug, Donna Petrie, and Frederick Sweitzer. Two others whose contributions are significant are Charlotte Duncan, our copy editor, and Bill Roe, our text editor, page designer, and publisher. All of these individuals deserve our thanks for their service to the journal and to the organization.

It is our pleasure to introduce Sandra Haynes who will assume the editorship of Human Service Education this summer. She is no stranger to the journal, having served on its Editorial Board for a number of years. Her timely articles and insightful book reviews have also appeared in the journal. At Metropolitan State College of Denver, she is currently Interim Associate Dean of the School of Professional Studies. Prior to this, she was Chair of the Department of Human Services. Sandra has received numerous grants and awards. Manuscripts should now be submitted to Dr. Haynes at Metropolitan State College of Denver, Campus Box 8, P.O. Box 173362, Denver, CO 80217.

It has been a pleasure serving as co-editors of the journal and we look forward to its continued evolution as a professional, refereed journal under the editorship of Sandra Haynes.

Tricia McClam
Co-Editor

Rob Lawson
Co-Editor

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Multiple Forms of Scholarship and Their Implications for Human Service Educators

H. Frederick Sweitzer

Introduction

Over the past 15 years I have been fortunate to have attended many national human service education conferences, as well as conferences in nearly every region of the country. I have also visited programs of a variety of sizes, shapes, and institutional affiliations. I never fail to learn something from these experiences, and I often find myself inquiring of someone whether the ideas I have just heard are published anywhere or whether or not there are plans for publication. Sometimes the answer is yes, but more often it is no; and I get a range of reasons, including “I don’t do that,” “I can’t do that,” “My institution doesn’t value that,” and “I don’t have time.”

Although I have been involved in human service education for 18 years, talked to a lot of people, and been to a lot of conferences, I have no systematic data about this issue; it would make an interesting research project. This is an editorial, and it is intended to frame issues and provoke thinking and discussion. I believe it is very important that human service educators publish their work for a variety of reasons. I also believe I have learned something about the barriers and impediments to that scholarship, although again I do not offer systematic data. And I believe that the work on multiple forms of scholarship, while certainly not a panacea, offers hope, inspiration and guidance as we strive to meet the challenges of scholarship in human service education.

Why Should We Publish?

Published scholarship in human services helps to ensure our survival on our campuses and meet our obligations as members of the higher education community. Human service education was born as a response to identified needs in the community, not the academy. While human service education programs were housed in colleges and universities, their missions focused on serving client needs, not on fostering scholarly inquiry. Programs to serve the
needs of employers, fill a need in the workforce, or study an identified problem in the local or national arena come and go from college campuses all the time; and that is what is happening in human service education. Programs that were started in response to particular needs, such as the need for mental health technicians, have closed or shifted their focus. A generation of faculty whose energies went into designing first-rate training programs is retiring, and colleges and universities are having to decide whether to continue to invest faculty positions and other resources into human service education programs.

If human services, or any other area, is to survive as an accepted, valued, and supported component of higher education programs, it must make multiple contributions to multiple audiences. Programs must serve their students, of course, and be able to document those results. Recent trends toward outcome assessment in higher education, as well as the attempts to define clear skill and knowledge sets in human services and a move toward credentialing of human service workers are evidence of movement in this area. Programs must also make contributions to the mission and values of their institutions, which are as many and varied as the number of institutions that house our programs. We need to show the institutions that support us that they can execute their missions more effectively because we are here. It will help if our programs also contribute to the issues, problems, and challenges facing higher education in general.

A critical obligation, however, is that our programs must contribute to some sort of knowledge base. We must speak to a wider audience than those found in our classrooms and communities so that others may learn from and build on our work. That, in my opinion, is the difference between a professor and a practitioner. One is not better than the other; they have different missions. If we do not make such contributions, why, in the end, should our institutions, state legislatures, and other funders continue to support us? Do we really believe that colleges and universities can serve the needs of the client communities more effectively than community-based agencies can? A recent article in the Chronicle of Higher Education points out that many foundations are turning away from higher education as a focus and turning instead to communities (Pulley, 2002). If, however, we can do something to serve the needs of clients and communities and teach a wider audience to do the same or contribute to a public discussion of the issues and problems, then we are making a contribution that only we can make.

My personal experience tells me we are doing admirable and interesting work in our classrooms and communities. It also tells me that we often labor in obscurity, even on our own campuses. As human service educators, we face common problems in pedagogy, ethics, and community collaboration. We work terribly hard, yet I have the nagging feeling that we often reinvent the wheel. As Lee Shulman (1999) asked, in discussing teaching, “How many professional educators, when engaged in creating a new course or a new curriculum, can turn to a published, peer-reviewed scholarship of teaching in which colleagues...present their experiments, their field trails, or their case studies of instruction and its consequences?” (p. 16).

We also have something to say to higher education. Some of the issues and trends that are being discussed in higher education circles, such as collaborative learning, experiential education, and service learning, are issues about which human service educators know a lot. Furthermore, there are increasing calls for colleges and universities to truly serve the communities and states that house and support them. As a result, colleges and universities are struggling with what it means to be an engaged campus, featuring deep and meaningful partnerships with communities, so that our communities are better for our academic and professional skills and our programs are better for the participation of the community. I have encountered countless examples of such partnerships in my travels to conferences, but almost none of them are discussed in print.

Why Don’t We?

Why is it that more of our good work is not made public? Again, I have not done a systematic investigation; but, when I talk with potential presenters and authors, I do hear several common themes, and they generally center on institutional demands and personal values. Human service education programs are housed in all manner of 2- and 4-year institutions. Some do not require their faculty to engage in scholarship nor reward those who do. Teaching loads in these institutions tend to be relatively high, making it difficult to find the time to engage in research and publication. Even in institutions that support or even demand scholarly activity, human service faculty members I talk with often have values dilemmas. They have high levels of commitment to their students and, often, equally high levels of commitment to the community. They are on the front lines with their sleeves rolled up, and it is hard for them to disengage from those activities and make the time to reflect and write, let alone launch a line of research.

Multiple Forms of Scholarship – An Opportunity

The work of Ernest Boyer, and others who built on his ideas, offers real hope for human service educators and others in similar circumstances. It expands the definition and concept of scholarship and, in so doing, allows faculty members to use their skills in a variety of ways and contribute to a variety of knowledge bases. It also allows them to lead more integrated lives, so that their teaching, scholarship, and service can branch from the same tree.

In his seminal work, Scholarship Reconsidered, Ernest Boyer (1990) argued that the kind of scholarship traditionally recognized in higher education is only one of several legitimate forms of scholarship. The development of new knowledge, the conduct of original research, is the form traditionally valued, and Boyer calls this the scholarship of discovery. For human service faculty, an
example of this kind of scholarship would be research into the etiology of substance abuse. The scholarship of application (which, in more recent writings, is called the scholarship of engagement) involves using knowledge in a discipline or field to help solve real problems. Faculty can bring this work to their campus communities or the communities in which they work and live. It should be noted that the application of theoretical knowledge to practical problems often alters the theory, allowing it to broaden and be more context sensitive.

To continue the previous example, in this way the question becomes less "how can we use our knowledge in the community to alleviate substance abuse?" and more "how can we partner with the community to more thoroughly understand and more effectively combat substance abuse?" A third form of scholarship, according to Boyer, is the scholarship of integration, which examines how disciplines can work together to illuminate questions of theory and problems of practice. The human service movement is, by nature, an interdisciplinary undertaking, blending psychology, sociology, education, and other disciplines. Finally, there is the scholarship of teaching (more recently called the scholarship of teaching and learning). In the scholarship of teaching and learning, faculty members attempt to build effective bridges between what they know and what their students understand. Put more simply, their teaching becomes the focus of their scholarship.

All of these forms of scholarship have implications for human service education. In particular, the scholarships of teaching and engagement seem integrally connected to the work of human service educators. Engaging in these forms of scholarship not only allows faculty members to study, reflect on, and write about those activities that are most central to what they want and are expected to do, but it also gives them an opportunity to contribute to a wider discussion about how to teach and partner in the community most effectively. Each of these forms of scholarship merits an article to itself. Here, I will focus on the scholarship of teaching and learning.

Persistent Questions

As promising as these new forms of scholarship are, there are also substantial challenges in conducting them. As faculty members, administrators, and faculty review committees have struggled to understand and assess multiple forms of scholarship, two sets of persistent questions have emerged. One set of questions revolves around the issue of activity versus scholarship, and the other around issues of assessing quality.

Activity versus Scholarship

If faculty members want to engage in the scholarship of teaching and learning, is it enough that they are good teachers? Is it enough that their teaching is informed by scholarship and research? If faculty members want to conduct the scholarship of engagement, is it enough that they are working in the community? The emerging consensus seems to be that no, it is not enough. It is not enough for review committees, it is not enough to meet the challenges facing human service education, and it is not enough to meet our obligations to the community of higher education.

The fact that there is a form of scholarship called the scholarship of teaching does not mean that teaching is, in and of itself, scholarship. Laurie Richlin (2001) makes an excellent and clear distinction among effective teaching, scholarly teaching, and the scholarship of teaching. Effective teaching, she says, is any teaching that enables students to learn. Scholarly teaching, which may or may not be effective, is informed by previous findings in the discipline and pedagogy. The scholarship of teaching and learning has to be some sort of public product that is available to a wider audience. This product may take the form of a conference presentation, but ultimately, to reach a wider audience, it must be available in print – either on the written page or through electronic means.

Assessing Quality

The second set of questions has to do with assessing quality. Put another way, what is it that determines whether a piece of writing about teaching deserves to be placed in a knowledge base? In the case of the scholarship of teaching, what separates a story about what someone did from a piece of scholarship that others can truly learn from and build on? Again, there has been a lot of attention paid to this question; and there is, by no means, universal agreement. What is presented here is a synthesis of some of the writing on the topic. In order to be considered scholarship and, I would argue, in order to be included in the knowledge base in human service education, a scholarly project must meet the following criteria: It must have at its core a clear goal and a guiding intellectual question; it must respond to some unique aspect of a situation; and it must be the result of systematic study, using methods that are consistent with the guiding question. Each of these criteria will now be discussed in turn.

Clear Goals/Guiding Questions

Faculty members who care about their teaching are always trying to change and improve something, and it is that desire to change and improve that is the genesis of the scholarship of teaching and learning. As Lee Shulman said, the scholarship of teaching and learning begins with an experience of the problematic or a vision of the possible (Hutchings, 2000). Perhaps, over and over, there is a topic that just doesn’t seem to interest students, even though the faculty member sees very clearly its relevance and importance. Perhaps there is a concept that eludes students, or eludes some students. Perhaps there is a perspective missing from the curriculum. Or perhaps the faculty member has a hope, a dream, a vision of a curriculum that integrates experience in the community with every class session. These troubling or inspiring issues are the genesis of the scholarship of teaching, but they are not enough.
proceeding, the faculty member must define a clear goal or question and do it in a way that will allow him or her to see whether it has been attained.

In the book, Opening Lines, Pat Hutchings (2000) presents the work of eight faculty members who are engaged in the scholarship of teaching and learning, and she suggests several categories of questions that they are pursuing. One set of questions is the “what is?” questions. Here, the faculty member attempts to understand more fully and completely the classroom situation as it exists now. For example, suppose a faculty member would like students to become more authentic and detailed in their appraisals of one another’s work. It might be helpful to first understand what the experience of critiquing and being critiqued is like for students. In the scholarship of teaching and learning, understanding and describing a phenomenon is just as important an undertaking as “proving” something (Hutchings & Shulman, 1999).

Another category of questions is “why?” questions. Here, the principle concern is understanding why a classroom or program problem exists. Why are students not able to transfer the information from their assessment course to their experience in the internship? Why are students not able to see the ethical dimensions of the cases they read? Pursuing this line of questioning, the faculty member can pose a number of possible answers to the question and investigate each one. Excellent examples of this sort of work can be found in the book, Classroom Research.

Finally, there are the “what works?” questions. Perhaps a faculty member has an idea for improving students’ abilities to respond empathically in a helping skills training course. In pursuing this line of questioning, it is important that faculty members be clear with themselves about what change they are seeking and about how they will know it when and if it happens. A faculty member may say that students should feel more comfortable and confident in their case assessments. What are those students saying, doing, or writing that makes the faculty member think they are not comfortable? And what can they say, do, or write that will let the faculty member – and anyone else – know that they are more comfortable and confident?

Responding to Unique Aspects

In presenting their work for publication or presentation, faculty members need to discuss the ways in which their work responded to unique aspects of a situation. There are two components to this task: setting the context and awareness of literature.

Teaching is a highly situational activity. No two programs are alike, even if the courses offered are the same. No two classes or sections are alike. There is always something unique, and that uniqueness often generates the guiding question. If others are to learn from and build on their work, faculty members need to be explicit about the context in which their guiding question arose. Questions to consider include what made you curious about this issue or problem? What are the characteristics of your students, your curriculum, your program, or the surrounding community and how did they affect your thinking?

While no two teaching situations are alike, it is important that faculty members embarking on the scholarship of teaching and learning have an awareness of work that has been done before on similar issues. Often, this involves exploring the literature in educational research. Some faculty members in human service education are trained as educational researchers and some are not, but the issue is not producing educational research; it is understanding it. So, for example, if the faculty member is considering using collaborative learning or peer teaching, the research literature on these topics needs to be examined. This exploration allows faculty members the opportunity to benefit from the experience of others and to build on it. By seeing what has been done before and in what context, faculty members can better consider and explain the unique nature of the situation at hand.

Using Appropriate Methods

The methods used in a project should be suggested by and consistent with the questions asked. There is no one acceptable or correct method in the scholarship of teaching and learning. Chances are that any doctorally prepared faculty member has been trained in some form of inquiry, and that form of inquiry can be used in the scholarship of teaching and learning. Scholars from a wide range of disciplines are engaged in this work and doing it in their own way. In fact, one of the exciting things about the scholarship of teaching and learning is that several people can explore the same general phenomenon or question from different perspectives and use different techniques.

For those faculty members who are not trained in any research tradition, then readings, classes, and collaboration with seasoned researchers can help them learn techniques that speak to the questions in which they are interested. Faculty who are more interested in the “what is?” questions may want to learn qualitative techniques, for they illuminate the phenomenological aspects of learners’ experiences better than quantitative techniques. For “what works?” questions, once the desired change has been clearly described, there are ways to assess the current level and to track change.

Conclusion

For those who are new to the scholarship of teaching and learning, this may seem like a daunting array of tasks. It is unquestionably an investment of time and energy. Heavy teaching loads and campus cultures that do not support, reward, or value scholarship are formidable obstacles. The newer forms of scholarship will not fix those problems in and of themselves, but they can make scholarship easier under those conditions. There are other benefits, as well. Being more systematic and reflective in studying teaching innovations is likely to lead to more effective teaching and to help guide continuing efforts at improvements. Whether or not something
works, something is learned, and more can be learned if the questions are asked clearly and studied well. For those faculty members who need to produce scholarship, enjoy it but fight for time to spend on it, or both, the extra effort may allow them to pursue teaching and scholarship simultaneously. Finally, it will help human service education as a profession and an academic discipline to claim a more prominent profile in the higher education landscape, both on individual campuses and in general.

References


Promoting Professionalism in Human Service Education

Thomas L. Evenson
Linda L. Holloway

Abstract
This article challenges educators to develop the human service student’s innate inclination toward a professional approach to practice. A conscious effort to incorporate individual professionalism as a central theme within the human service academic program can enhance students' self-perception, self-confidence and, ultimately, the quality of services delivered to the individuals they serve.

Introduction
Despite their requirement for a solid foundation of knowledge and competencies related to human service work, employers frequently shift to another level when asked what they consider to be of greatest importance in a human service employee. They cite such qualities as honesty, responsibility, trustworthiness, personal appearance, enthusiasm, commitment, and a strong work ethic. A special focus group comprised of employers of baccalaureate-level workers was conducted to determine their priorities when filling human service positions. The employers identified specific skills (verbal and written communication, interviewing, job placement, etc.) but were unanimous in the primary value they placed on more abstract characteristics, such as personal integrity, commitment, willingness to learn, ethical behavior, and initiative. The views of the focus group members were supported by survey responses obtained from other human service employers when asked to prioritize the knowledge, skills, and attitudes they look for in prospective employees (Evenson & Holloway, 2000). It is clear that employers want workers who behave in a “professional” way.

There is some irony in this expectation for human service workers. While they are expected to present themselves in a professional manner, too many of them are not considered to be “professionals.” This problem was highlighted...
in a disturbing way in draft material for the 2002–2003 edition of the Occupational Outlook Handbook (U. S. Department of Labor, 1994) and the Career Guide to Industries (U. S. Department of Labor, 2000-2001) that accompanies it. The job title used for people we consider to be human service professionals was to be changed to human service assistants (McKinney, 2001). The term “assistant” is a poor descriptor for people who assume the level of responsibility commonly assigned to human service workers.

Unfortunately, from the perspective of many people, status as a professional is reserved for those who have been prepared at the graduate or post-graduate levels. The majority of human service workers are trained at the associate and bachelors levels, and most of them have significant responsibilities. Most are highly committed to their work and to the individuals they serve. They are given the responsibility for being professionals without the status or benefits that typically accompany that title. The mixed message is “You must be like a professional... but don’t get the idea that you are one.”

This article proposes that human service workers have the right to be treated as professionals on the basis of the qualities that characterize their approach to their careers. We submit that the educational preparation of human service workers can establish a foundation by which students can earn the respect of others as professionals. The article is designed to challenge human service educators to actively nurture a spirit of professionalism among students in ways that ensure that individual professionalism becomes a part of their identity as human service workers throughout their careers.

What Is a Profession?

The word profession comes from the Latin term profiteri, which means to declare or avow something out loud or publicly. Originally, the avowal was related to entering the religious life; but, by the 16th century, the word had evolved to include declaring the entrance to an occupation that was devoted to saving lives or souls—or the kind of work carried out by priests, doctors, and attorneys. By the 19th century, the term was broadened to include any legitimate occupation by which an individual made money.

Does one have to be a member of a profession to be a professional? If so, there are probably a limited number of professionals. Established occupations, such as law, medicine, dentistry, and the clergy, appear to meet the kinds of standards normally required to qualify as a profession. Other occupations, such as engineering and architecture, meet most of these standards (Andersen, 1993). Still other disciplines, like psychology, counseling, social work, and teaching, have striven to reach the status of profession; but they are not fully recognized as such, despite the arguments of their respective advocates. Occupations that constitute the broad area of human services generally are not considered to be among the recognized professions.

Most relevant to our discussion is a question raised by Cogan (1955) almost 50 years ago when he asked if professionalism was inevitably a group phenomenon or if it could be achieved on an individual basis. Hughes (1958) claimed that the “culture and technique, the etiquette and skill of the profession, appear in the individual as personal traits...” (p. 36). He suggested that the term professionalized commonly refers to the development of an occupation, but that it is increasingly being used to describe “what happens to an individual in the course of training for his occupation” (Hughes, 1967, p. 4). More recently, Van Zandt (1990) contended that it is quite possible to be professional without necessarily being a member of a recognized profession.

It is appropriate to talk about professionalism even if an occupation is not viewed as an established profession. We believe that the majority of human service workers are professional in their approach to their work and that the genesis of their professionalism comes as part of their formal training in human services. Ritzer (1971) suggested professional schools “are concerned with communicating the skills, knowledge, norms, and values which are needed for the individual to be considered, and consider himself, a professional” (p. 71). The preparation that students receive in human service education programs should include the foundation for the development of their individual professionalism.

What Is Professionalism?

Definitions or descriptions of professionalism are many and varied. Professionalism is described in terms of attitudes, behaviors, or a combination of the two. Weiss (1981) believes that professionalism extends beyond knowledge and skills in that it reflects a person’s commitment as a professional and her or his socialization into the role of a professional. Peterson and Nisenholz (1987) didn’t see professionalism as something that is accomplished but as a process that extends throughout one’s lifetime. Van Zandt (1990) explained that the ism in professionalism includes behaviors and attitudes that are characteristic of true professionals. Maister (1997) suggested that the opposite of professionalism is not “unprofessional” but technician. Technicians are specialists in the competencies that they develop through special training. Rather than a set of competencies, according to Maister, the core of professionalism is attitude. He defined a real professional as a “technician who cares” (p. 16).

While there may be a direct connection between professionalism and members of a recognized profession, many believe that professionalism goes beyond that limited scope. In a commencement speech at Penn State Harrisburg, McClean (1999) warned new graduates that not everyone who graduates from college as a professional exhibits professionalism and went on to challenge students to adopt a spirit of professionalism regardless of the occupations they pursue. Ritzer (1971) noted that, while some occupations are clearly seen as professions, members of those occupations do not necessarily manifest all of the qualities expected of a professional. For example, in the medical profession, individual physicians are likely to vary in their degree of professionalism. According to Hall (1968) ‘some “established” professions
have rather weakly developed professional attitudes, while some of the less professionalized groups have very strong attitudes in this regard" (p. 103). He contended that this is a result of socialization, which occurs both in the educational training program and the work itself. In such cases where people adhere to strong professional and ethical principles, altruism and the interest of the client should motivate the professional more than her or his self-interest or that of the organization. Hall’s work supports the contention that one need not belong to a recognized profession in order to be a professional. Professionalism is a personal responsibility.

Maister (1997) presented professionalism within a context that clearly extends beyond the established professions when he identified characteristics that distinguished a great secretary from a good secretary:

- They take pride in their work; they are committed to quality; they seek out responsibility; they take initiative; they anticipate what needs to be done; they go beyond their assigned role but know what their limits are; they act in ways that streamline the loads of others; they make a point of learning and understanding the business/company/agency; they genuinely listen to the people they work for and with; they can represent the people they serve because they have made a point of understanding and thinking like them; while they appreciate themselves, they are not self-absorbed; they are team players; they can be trusted to keep confidences; they are willing to learn, accepting of feedback and open to change; and they are consistently honest, trustworthy, and loyal. (p. 15)

Among the most common uses of the terms professional and professionalism are those found in relation to athletes. In its most basic form, an individual is a professional if she or he makes a living as an athlete. If an individual does not earn money, she or he is an amateur. Hoch (2000) argued that a true professional athlete is someone who does more than earn a living through sports. He suggested “A coach, an administrator, an athlete, who handles him/herself stylishly—meaning calmly, fairly, with a feeling for the rightness of things—is a professional” (p. 10).

Hoch (2000) believed that it isn’t so much what a person is doing as it is how the person does it that determines whether she or he is a professional. According to Hoch, among the characteristics that comprise the practice of professionalism are courtesy, trust, ethics and integrity, personal appearance, communication, enthusiasm, positive attitude, ability to relate well to others, involvement with professional organizations, program involvement, service as a mentor, fairness, and personal improvement.

There is little agreement on how to define professionalism. Yet the commonalities between the lists provided by Maister and Hoch suggest that there is a general understanding of what constitutes professional behavior and attitudes. In short, we know a professional when we see one, and we see many among the ranks of human service workers.

Professionalism is something that need not depend on level of education, number or type of credentials, years of experience, or even the occupation one is in. Students graduating from associate- and bachelor’s-level programs in human services are as capable of being as professional as the most dedicated doctors, lawyers, or architects. They are fully capable of developing the kinds of characteristics outlined by Maister (1997) and Hoch (2000) and countless others who have addressed the issue of professionalism. At a minimum, students graduating from human service programs can begin their careers as professionals by understanding and subscribing to the meaning and principle of the Latin root word for profession, profiteri—to declare or avow something out loud or publicly. The foundation for their development as human service professionals will be their pride in and commitment to the kind of work they intend to do.

Relevance To Human Service Education

Most employers could describe professional behavior. Directors of human service agencies rely on educational institutions to provide them with graduates who can make a difference in the lives of the clients. Prospective employers expect graduates to be competent, knowledgeable, and professional. In fact, professional behavior may be the most important factor because employers know that they compensate for skill deficiencies through in-service training. There is an expectation that human service education programs screen out individuals who fall short in these areas and develop a commitment to professionalism among their students.

Some may argue that the kinds of qualities associated with professionalism are basically inherent. It is our belief that human service education students possess the seeds of these qualities. The challenge facing educators is to initiate the process that allows the qualities to fully emerge.

This is a formidable task that may encounter initial student resistance. Adopting professional habits can be a slow process with few immediate payoffs or advantages. Developing professional behavior is a process that requires time, energy, self-discipline, extra work, and delayed gratification. Students must be convinced that, in order to carry out their responsibilities, they need to behave in a professional way.

Responsibility of Educators

To promote professionalism in students, educators must go beyond the development of knowledge and skills in the different subject fields. The curriculum, indeed the entire degree program, must be infused with an emphasis on professionalism. Although appreciating the need for developing professionalism within students, educators can become hypervigilant in pursuing the more concrete and measurable goals of covering topics and
Belief in Students' Capacity

First, educators must genuinely believe in their students' capacity to behave professionally. Our belief is based on an appreciation of the core values and motivations that prompt students to pursue a human service education. We have a right to expect that students will develop genuine professional characteristics. Students adopt our professional expectations as a norm for working in human services. Students are encouraged to see themselves as everything they can be.

Educators convey their confidence in student potential by setting high standards. In the process, we provide the necessary structure and support. Professionals identify individual strengths and accept their limitations. Periodic self-inventories of personal strengths and faculty feedback can provide students ongoing baselines. Students can then develop and progressively modify their individual plans to effectively meet the program's curriculum standards.

Effective professionals are interdependent and know how to complement each other's strengths and limitations. As students work toward gaining knowledge and competence, educators help them to understand that many responsibilities are fulfilled through collaboration with colleagues. Team exercises are introduced to address specific content/skill areas and ways to capitalize on individual strengths. Collaboration can provide a framework for the development of a capacity for teamwork that is so vital within human service agencies.

Self-Understanding

The individual, him- or herself, is the primary occupational tool of the human service professional. Therefore, it is important that human service students know, understand, and appreciate themselves at a deeper level. Facilitating self-exploration is a core component of any human service program and there are many different strategies for doing this. Okun (2002), Woodside and McClam (2002) and Egan (2002) are among many who stress the importance of the student's examination and understanding of personal beliefs, assumptions, feelings, and values in preparation for a career in the human services. The cornerstone of self-understanding is self-honesty. Students must be given opportunities to identify and critically evaluate personal values, beliefs, assumptions, and expectations. To prevent students from getting lost in self-criticism and judgment, faculty can encourage self-awareness and understanding throughout their careers.

There are a variety of approaches for facilitating student self-exploration through exercises, assignments, and field experiences. Individual conferences, group dialogue, seminars, and journaling are common ways of encouraging self-awareness. These approaches should include opportunities for student processing and discussion. Students must feel secure enough to evaluate the values, beliefs, and ideas they bring with them into the program. Effective educators understand student anxiety and develop environments that allow students to risk serious self-examination. Educators do not need to "transform" their students into professionals because they already possess the basic ingredients. Students simply need an avenue by which they recognize and develop the inherent qualities within themselves that will contribute to their professionalism.

Program Theme

Educators can assume the responsibility for making professionalism an underlying theme within human service education programs. There is no need for a separate course on professionalism. Instead, professionalism can be infused throughout the human service curriculum. Its relevance is apparent in such curriculum areas as case management, interviewing, community resources, and group work. Professionalism issues are particularly integral to practicum and internship courses where students have an opportunity to directly demonstrate professional qualities and receive feedback from their supervisors. A professionalism theme can be manifested through such standard program experiences as admission interviews, capstone courses, and exit interviews.

The extent of student integration of professional behaviors and principles may be incorporated into a comprehensive student assessment process prior to graduation. A program could emphasize its theme of professionalism through a student code of honor. Advanced students can be asked to serve as role models for beginning students. The program could give special recognition to students who personify professional qualities.

Educators could incorporate extra credit options for behavioral qualities (leadership, integrity, initiative, collaboration and teamwork, commitment, appearance, etc.) that demonstrate the kind of professionalism valued by the program. Symposia on professionalism can be conducted for students and include the participation of field supervisors, employers, and other human service professionals. Employers are likely to be willing to "speak from the trenches" and promote a professional identity by students. In short, human service programs can strive to make professionalism their trademark. The program’s commitment to professionalism can help set it apart from other associate- and baccalaureate-level academic programs and, ultimately, distinguishing its graduates from graduates of other programs.

Role Models

It is important that educators become role models as professionals for students. Discussing professionalism and incorporating it as a program theme may have some effect, but the most lasting impact may be what students observe. Students observe how faculty interact and respond to colleagues in various circumstances. They learn about the importance of written communication and reflect on how we present our syllabi, assignments,
and feedback. Punctuality is emphasized as a characteristic of a professional; and students notice the timeliness of our return phone calls, returned assignments, and availability for appointments. We stress the fact that appearing professional is a component of professionalism; and students pay extra attention to the way we present ourselves, the condition of our offices, and even the way that we expect them to address us (Mr., Ms., Dr., first name, Professor, etc.) in our professional roles.

One mark of professionalism is membership and involvement in professional organizations, and students wonder to what organizations we belong. Students are exposed to the qualities and characteristics of individuals considered professional. They then look at us to see if they can find such characteristics as self-confidence, self-honesty, nonjudgmentalness, multicultural appreciation, openness to change, willingness to risk, and a sense of humor. For better or worse, human service faculty are among the most influential models for how students conceptualize professionalism; and they will eventually incorporate it into their own careers.

Faculty are not the only role models available to students. It is important to expose students to other professionals within the human service field. Guest lecturers and field supervisors who model professional qualities and characteristics can make an important impression on students. If professionalism is a fundamental theme within a human service program, students will quietly scrutinize the behavior of human service professionals. More important, student involvement with human service professionals can promote professional standards.

Potential employers can serve as role models who advocate professionalism. These individuals can point out differences between professionals and technicians. They can also explain what they expect in an employee and describe the kind of worker who will advance in the field. From a student’s perspective, prospective employers may have more credibility than their instructors because they are the ones who are in the “real world.”

Program graduates may be another source of role models for human service students. Alumni can emphasize the importance of professionalism and the need for students to assume this responsibility. Like employers, graduates have credibility with students because they see them as having successfully attained the goal to which they aspire.

Commitment to the Field

Human service educators can nurture a sense of passion and commitment to the human service profession. Faculty can work toward ensuring that students fully appreciate the significance of the kind of work they intend to pursue. Human service faculty can serve as a catalyst for the development of student pride in their profession. Students can begin to recognize and appreciate the significance of their professional responsibilities and potential contributions to the human service field. The goal is to cultivate a genuine personal and professional pride.

Pride in being a human service worker is the foundation for students’ perception of themselves as professionals. The pride and confidence that faculty members have in their own roles as human service professionals can stimulate their students’ belief that they, too, have a right to be proud of their professionalism. They recognize it as one of the rewards that comes with a career in the human services. This sense of self-pride is supplemented by the autonomy, privileges, opportunities, and prestige that can be found through a human service career. Their sense of professionalism can lead to a confidence in themselves as individuals and contribute to the significance of their work with people. By inspiring this sense of professionalism, educational programs go beyond the provision of knowledge and skill development to laying a foundation for a lifelong commitment to the highest standards of service to others in society.

Conclusion

Human service workers have established themselves as competent, dedicated personnel in a dynamic and challenging field. They distinguish themselves through their work with other helping professionals, yet terms like assistant are used to describe them. As human service leaders continue their efforts to counter this inequity by advocating for external validation, educators in human service programs can address it on another front. By instilling a sense of personal professionalism in their students, educators prepare their students to demonstrate through their behavior and the quality of their work that they deserve to be respected as professionals. By adopting professionalism as a cornerstone of their programs, human service programs can earn the reputation as a resource for employees of the highest quality. Graduates will be sought out because they are not only competent in critical knowledge and skill areas, but also because of their genuine commitment to the work they do. Human service educators can plant the seeds of professionalism and the fruits of those seeds will ultimately help change the perception that other professionals may have of the human service worker.

References
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Peer Advising: An Opportunity for Leadership and Competency Development
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Abstract
Advising is an important aspect of the university learning experience as it provides assistance to students to help them navigate an academic program in pursuit of a degree. Peer advising is one model for delivering advising services. This article describes peer advising in the Human Service Program at the University of Tennessee. Students who serve as peer advisors provide a needed service, contribute to the human service program through their leadership, and benefit from developing competence consistent within the human service profession.

Introduction
Advising, a critical part of a student’s collegiate experience, is universal across institutions and plays a major part in the academic experience for all students. According to the National Academic Advising Association (2002), advising evolves from the institution’s culture, values, and practices and is delivered in accordance with these factors. As important as advising is, it is not always easy for faculty to devote much time or effort toward this endeavor. Faculty members at institutions of higher education have various and numerous responsibilities, only one being effectively advising students. Also, competing responsibilities (i.e., teaching and scholarly work) can interfere with program development activities. For many, advising is not a priority. In most academic institutions, scholarship and teaching are differently rewarded and, often, are valued over advising and other service activities. Additionally, faculty members are limited to their role and perspective as faculty; they are no longer students. It is difficult for faculty to provide adequate advising support from a student perspective and to empathize with current student problems and pressures.
Although students are increasingly exposed to field experiences and service learning projects as learning environments to develop human service competencies, it is rare that students have the opportunity to practice newly learned competencies for a full semester under the direct, close supervision of an academic instructor. It is also rare for human service students to codirect learning activities that build professional competence while contributing to and benefiting the academic program in which they are enrolled. The National Association of Academic Advising (2002) suggests that advisors strive to change barriers that interfere with student progress, be sensitive to the unique needs of all students (e.g., conduct office hours at less traditional times), and work to effect change. The peer advising program presented in this article addresses these challenges; builds students’ professional competence; and expands the role of peer advisors in a manner consistent with the culture, values, and practices at The University of Tennessee Human Service Program.

The Human Service faculty at The University of Tennessee designed a peer advising program, identified needed activities, and implemented them. Specifically, the study reported here identifies corresponding competencies for each of the major activities through interviews with two groups of three female peer advisors at the end of two different semesters. A discussion of the implications of peer advising for human service education and recommendations for further research concludes the article.

Benefits of Peer Advising

Essentially, three broad models of academic advising exist: (1) faculty, (2) peer, and (3) a split faculty/peer model. Faculty as advisors, the most traditional of the three models, occurs when the faculty member, exclusively, is designated as a student advisor. Peers serve as advisors in such positions as peer helpers and residence hall assistants. These peer advising models are distinct and separate from faculty advising. The models of peer helpers and residence hall assistants, combined, are the most systematic use of students as peer, and (3) a split faculty/peer model. Faculty as advisors, the most traditional of the three models, occurs when the faculty member, exclusively, is designated as a student advisor. Peers serve as advisors in such positions as peer helpers and residence hall assistants. These peer advising models are distinct and separate from faculty advising. The models of peer helpers and residence hall assistants, combined, are the most systematic use of students as advisors in academia (Winston & Enter, 1988). Two decades ago, a split approach of faculty-peer advising was cited as a supplement to faculty, and served as support to busy faculty members and provided information to students about student affairs-related issues (Privette & Delawder, 1982; Stickle, 1982).

Recent academic advising literature suggests that the role of peer advisors can be multifaceted; arranged to assist faculty, programs, and students; and a significant learning experience for peer advisors (Altschuler, 2000; Biaggio, Paget & Chenoweth, 1997; Fedor-Joseph, 1992; Frisz, 1999; Miller & Alberts, 1994; Russel & Skinkle, 1990). There are three main purposes of peer advising programs. The first is learning and understanding. Peer advising is a natural bridge to help span the gap between teaching, learning, and advising (Miller & Alberts, 1994). Peer advising supplies a unique learning opportunity for the peer advisor to develop core professional competencies in a variety of roles: listener, guide, recruiter, fund-raising initiator, community service project director, project coordinator, resource manager, leader, referrer agent, mentor, and role model. Peer advising students are able to provide a service to their departments while, concurrently, learning more about their own academic pursuits. Holland and Huba (1989) reported that not only were peer advisors able to assist fellow students, but they were also able to gain from personal and professional development through service projects.

The second purpose is recruitment and retention. Some peer advising programs direct efforts to recruit, orient, and retain college freshman students (Altschuler, 2000; Fedor-Joseph, 1992; Russel & Skinkle, 1990) or minimize freshman trauma (Altschuler, 2000). Trombley (1984) identified peer advising as a source of information and counseling. Information was defined as the academic support requested by students, including registering, selecting courses, scheduling, and the like. Counseling pertained to students’ personal needs. These efforts were aimed at recruiting and retaining quality students.

The third is universality, or a sense of connection through similar experiences, through equitable relationships. When students help fellow students, they feel “they are in the same boat.” While providing guidelines for managing faculty-student ethical relationships, Biaggio et al. (1997) provided reasons to support peer advising models in higher education programs by noting the unequal power inherent in faculty-student relationships. Student peers are undergoing similar experiences and can empathize with these likenesses, creating equitable relationships, more so than with faculty advisors. Student advising and guidance demand many of the interactive skills required of a well-prepared human service professional, such as attending, observing, active listening, support, empathy, exploration, questioning, clarification, elaboration, encouraging, paraphrasing, reflecting, and summarizing (Chang & Scott, 1999; Ivey & Ivey, 2003; Murphy & Dillon, 1998). When peers are added to the advising equation, the diversity of backgrounds and interests can help address multicultural counseling issues (Frisz, 1999). Russel & Skinkle (1990) found an increased sense of academic community membership and involvement in student activities from first-year male and female students who received support from peer advising. Alexitch (1997) reminds advisors to remain aware and sensitive to different student characteristics critical to effective faculty-student advising. Peer advisors are able to instinctively remain aware, sensitive, and empathetic to student concerns.

The literature suggests that there are benefits to implementing various peer advising approaches. Each program has unique features and purposes. Also, programs may experience challenges. Rittenhouse, Stephan, and LeVine (1984) studied peer advising students and warned that the students studied “had an overall tendency... to blame other students for their failures by explaining failures in terms of internal faults or personality deficits rather than as a function of external factors” (p. 394). Russel & Skinkle (1990) offered input that may help avoid this type of difficulty by reporting that effective communication skills and personal and professional characteristics related to
tolerance, breadth of interest, and inquisitiveness are key factors for effective peer advisors.

Peer Advising Model

The goal of peer advising in the Human Service Program at The University of Tennessee is to assist peers by providing orientation, guidance, resources, and referrals and to develop programmatic activities that promote the human service program. A peer advisor is an advanced (i.e., junior or senior standing) student majoring in human services who engages in peer advising as an independent study requirement. For the past 2 years, the peer advising program structure has included five components: (a) peer advisor selection, (b) orientation and training, (c) program identity and service through activity completion, (d) self-directed peer advising activities, and (e) ongoing improvement through feedback and evaluation. These five factors serve as a rudder and guide the program. A human service faculty member directs the peer advising program.

Selection Process

Near the middle or end of Fall and Spring semesters, flyers recruiting students to apply to serve as a peer advisor during the upcoming semester are posted. Faculty members and current peer advisors are asked to recommend outstanding upper class students. Since the peer advisors provide curriculum guidance and answer many student questions related to progression through the major (both of which require experience gained through involvement), peer advisor positions are offered only to junior and seniors. Applicants are asked to provide a current résumé, a transcript, and a letter stating the reason(s) he or she would like to be a peer advisor. The director screens applications to ensure all requested documents are included and complete. Those applicants who pass the initial screening are called for an interview. Minimum qualifications include a 2.0 GPA overall and a 2.5 GPA in the major, although most peer advisors greatly exceed the minimum requirements. Peer advising candidates are interviewed by the director and by current peer advisors in a panel interview format. Each candidate is interviewed separately and asked to demonstrate knowledge of the human service program, understanding of peer advising, and experiences with peer advising. Candidates are asked questions that help determine the level of commitment to the program, time availability, level of maturity, and communication skills.

Once the interviews are complete, the peer advisors make recommendations to the director. The director then contacts the top three to four candidates by telephone to inform each candidate she or he has been selected. On average, three students act as peer advisors each semester. A student may also ask to be a peer advisor for more than one semester, a request that is typically granted. Peer advisor overlap naturally builds in a beneficial transition tool from semester to semester.

Those selected to be peer advisors register for independent study credit. Each peer advisor develops a contract with the director for the tasks she will complete and for the number of credit hours she or he expects to earn from the peer advising position. One credit hour per semester is equivalent to 3 hours of peer advising effort per week. Most peer advisors register for 1 credit hour. On occasion, a peer advisor may contract for 2-3 credit hours. He or she does this when committing to large projects that require more time. Peer advisors incorporate advising activities into their culminating portfolio—an academic exercise required during field experience courses. This is accomplished by providing a written document including a summary of peer advising activities in which they were involved, roles and responsibilities taken, course text references substantiating strategies used, and examples from peer advising experiences that illustrate the professional competencies learned or honed during their labor as a peer advisor.

Orientation and Training

Once selected to be a peer advisor, the student receives a peer advising handbook. The handbook is designed for peer advisors by previous peer advisors. In it, peer advisors describe activities (i.e., a task analysis of each major activity), supporting documents (e.g., announcement flyers, fundraising requests, silent auction items, donation letters, and thank-you letters), semester time-line schedules, and office management information (e.g., file location, computer filing system, and e-mail and voice-mail pass codes). Peer advisors are instructed to review the handbook before the first meeting of the new semester.

Second, although the handbook provides step-by-step instructions for each activity conducted in the past, peer advisors are encouraged to consider new ways to accomplish the same tasks. Peer advisors become excited with this self-directed process and typically improve upon the efforts from the previous semester. Each cohort puts its unique “stamp” on the peer advising program. Often these contributions raise the bar (i.e., improving a specific activity or adding a new component). Ideas that prove to be successful are then incorporated into the program as an expectation for the next group of peer advisors. Therefore, the handbook requires ongoing revision. The task of revising the handbook is considered one of the major activities conducted within peer advising.

Program Identity and Service Through Activity Completion

At this time, peer advising activities include the following: (a) guidance and advising, which includes curriculum planning, housing resources for course projects, and information dissemination (e.g., Web-page design and maintenance); (b) open house which includes program identity development, recruiting, and fund raising; (c) senior celebration for graduating seniors; (d) handbook editing and revision; and (e) office management. Each peer advisor selects a major task or two and becomes the primary coordinator responsible...
for its successful planning and completion. Concurrently, each peer advisor contributes time and effort to each of the five activities.

Guidance and advising are accomplished through establishing a weekly office-hour schedule for all the peer advisors. The director ensures that a variety of days and times are covered to increase accessibility to students seeking assistance. Peer advisors are available during scheduled hours to help students plan their class schedules, register for courses, determine program stipulations and prerequisite courses, problem-solve obstructions to registration (e.g., registration restricted because of an unpaid fine), look through field-placement files to begin narrowing down the many options to three viable choices, help access online course materials, clarify deadline dates for progression into the major interviews or applications for graduation, and sundry other tasks.

The open house event quickly developed into a signature biannual occasion. Its purpose is to generate a sense of camaraderie and identity to those enrolled in human service courses or majoring in human services. It is also a time for faculty members and students to connect informally. Food, a human service banner, a table with a national honor society display and applications, and a silent auction all contribute to the festive welcoming atmosphere. Peer advisors solicit donations from local businesses for the open house, making it a fund-raising event, too. At the end of the Fall 2001 auction, more than $500 was raised. These proceeds are designated for peer advising activities and an account has been established with peer advisors managing the ledger.

The peer advisors sponsored another community fund-raising event on “Make a Difference Day.” These efforts combined the national event with an adopted program slogan, “Human Services Rocks,” and a newly created slogan, “Change Makes a Difference.” The latter slogan was meant to solicit donations of loose pocket change. The event was held at The Rock, a large rock located on campus that students are allowed to paint anytime and in almost any fashion. The event generated more than $200 for a local shelter for abused and neglected children. Peer advisors identified a community need, networked with the local community, created a community-focused service learning experience, involved fellow students and faculty, and generated funds for a community agency. At the same time, peer advisors created the opportunity to enhance their own community support skills needed in their future careers as human service professionals.

Senior celebration is an important time to acknowledge the accomplishments of graduating seniors. Peer advisors plan a meal (e.g., lunch, dinner, picnic) to celebrate this occasion. It is a time for peer advisors, graduating seniors, their parents and families, and the faculty to celebrate the accomplishments of the seniors. Since about 12 students graduate each semester, the event provides the opportunity for faculty to honor those graduating.

The peer advising handbook offers task analyses outlining standard procedures and detailed steps to accomplish the major activities and office management tasks (e.g., password or pass code information for e-mail and voice mail, web-site access, plant-watering schedule, ordering supplies, disbursement of honor society regalia, activity-log procedures, mailbox location, office-key location, computer-file management, hard-copy file management, etc.). Because peer advisors are constantly adding creative new ideas and activities to the program, revising and updating the handbook requires ongoing effort. Handbook revision gives peer advisors an opportunity to develop generic planning skills, such as program design and planning program services.

An office, designated exclusively for peer advising, was acquired after the college completed building renovations. The office provides stability, permanence, and identity to the program. Office management is challenging, especially since three to four different peer advisors share the space during the same semester. Each peer advisor has her or his own organizational method, and these differences can create confusion, leading to poor communication adversely affecting progress. It is critical to appoint one peer advisor as office manager each semester. Duties include keeping the office space orderly and presentable, filing new materials (i.e., electronic organization of computer files and hard copy documents), managing income and expenses in the program ledger and ensuring these records are in sync with the department books, keeping voice mail and e-mail records, updating the task bulletin board, reading and responding to incoming mail, discarding old materials, replacing or repairing broken office furnishings, and updating the human services information bulletin board, and so forth.

**Competency Development**

Peer advisors are able to build professional competencies as outlined by the Council for Standards in Human Service Education (2000). In an informal interview setting near the end of each semester, peer advisors were asked to identify examples of competencies developed through their experience. Examples given by peer advisors during these debriefing sessions include the following:

1. The first falls under interpersonal skills, interviewing skills, analyzing client (i.e., student) needs, dealing effectively with conflict. These are practiced and refined through office visits, incidental contact with classmates seeking advice, and through the peer advising meetings. One peer advisor commented, “Sometimes all the student needs is someone to listen, really listen, without passing judgment.”

2. A second area of competency building occurs within administrative skills, delegating tasks and supervising activities. A peer advisor highlighted the process by which these competencies were learned, practiced, and demonstrated when she reviewed the procedure used...
within the group peer advising meetings during the course of the semester. "Project coordinators identify jobs that have to be completed, ask for help (from fellow peer advisors), make sure each person understands her assignment, and then insist on a deadline."

3. Information skills are a third competency area developed by peer advisors. Filing updated agency brochures and Web-site information alphabetically is an ongoing task. Peer advisors created an index or table of contents of all available agency information. In addition, they created a matrix whereby agencies can be identified by service area or population served (e.g., corrections; education; mental health settings; elderly, children, and adolescent client groups). "I hated filing, it was so boring...but making the matrix helped me sort all those agency files and understand how different some agencies are from others."

4. A fourth competency illustration again involves the skills necessary for effective planning on a more systemic level. Before peer advisors help beginning students with curriculum planning, they are required to complete their own curriculum worksheet by obtaining a current transcript, locating a human services program guideline packet, and securing a curriculum worksheet designed for his/her track or concentration within the major. This trial run helps familiarize peer advisors with the steps necessary to provide effective curriculum advising: "I'd done it before for myself, several times, but it helped me to be prepared when I did it again with another student in mind."

5. Technology is a final competency area. It assists in program maintenance. Peer advisors actively use computer software to create form letters and envelopes; develop flyers; design the newsletter; log activities; send and respond to electronic mail; and design the peer advising Web page, a skill competency we plan to further increase in the near future. Two different peer advisors reflected, "I learned how to use Publisher to make a newsletter" and "I never knew how to make a form letter and now I know how." Integrating human service competencies with technology skills is a necessary task for future human service workers.

Other responses indicated that peer advisors learn to be resourceful, to arrange logistics involved in event planning, and to operate effectively in an organizational structure. Organizational structure pertains to the program of study, department, college, and university as a whole. Peer advisors stated that they practiced public speaking, recruiting, and fund raising tasks while developing efficient methods to communicate information to large numbers of students (e.g., the newsletter and on-campus televised ad in the form of a flyer). Peer advisors express surprise over the large amount of work and effort required to manage an office and for project planning and implementation. Satisfaction is expressed in terms of being an approachable resource for students. Working as part of a peer advising team and seeing planning and implementation efforts reach fruition were also identified as satisfying. Peer advising provided an opportunity to be involved in the Human Services Progression program in a unique and contributory role. Peer advisors recognized professional growth and development in the areas of networking and collaboration with community businesses.

Implications for Human Service Education

Five implications for human service educators are apparent:

1. Peer advising provides an exemplary setting in which a multitude of core competencies and community support skill standards can be practiced and developed.

2. Leadership is implied as a competency within the core competencies of human service workers in the area of administrative supervision and staff training (Council for Standards in Human Service Education, 2000). These competencies and community support skill standards suggest that human service educators provide the instruction and opportunity for students to learn and practice these leadership skills. Peer advising provides an ideal opportunity, outside of a classroom setting, whereby students are intentionally placed in a leadership role and given the direction necessary to develop and refine leadership skills. One peer advisor stated, "(I feel) more confident about my leadership skills."

3. Peer advising provides a human service atmosphere that promotes service to the academic program and peers. Peer advising efforts clearly provide support to over-burdened faculty. Accurate and timely information dissemination by informed peer advisors decreases the likelihood that misinformation is conveyed through informal student conversation. Moreover, peer advising provides a model for becoming actively involved within an academic community. This practice acts as a positive model to students for concurrently or later joining local, state, regional, and national professional organizations. Service also gives students the chance to make a significant contribution to the program. Contribution builds ownership, pride, and commitment. Peer advising may increase long-term commitment to the program by those students serving as peer advisors and those students receiving the assistance from peer advisors.

4. Fourth, peer advising offers a place and context where peer advisors can venture into new professional territory. Because of the self-directed management style and many components and opportunities inherent in successfully navigating and conducting the major events, peer advisors are given multiple opportunities to develop talents and exercise skills by generating new ideas, coordinating projects, and seeing projects through to fruition. They expand personally and grow professionally through stretching human service talents and skills in a safe and supportive environment.
5. Activities that promote professional competency development were identified; however, not enough objective assessment was given to this area. Data were collected from peer advisor reports on their own learning. Future research should be more acutely focused on measuring peer advisor competence development. Competency measures could be taken prior and just following the peer advising experience to better determine growth and development as a result of peer advising efforts. The researcher—author acted in dual roles as peer advisor supervisor—-instructor. Therefore, an inherent bias exists, and objective analysis is compromised.

**Recommendations**

Peer advising success does not imply the model is problem free. As successful as this peer advising program has become, it also has its challenges. A few limits are reviewed to help other programs avoid similar mistakes.

The study investigated one program in one setting. All peer advisors were female. The peer advising model described in this study was at a 4-year university. The majority of human service programs reside at 2-year institutions. Adaptations to this model, especially in defining advanced or experienced students to act as peer advisors, may be necessary. These two limitations limit external validity to other programs and those that include male peer advisors. Replication of peer advising programs with objective study of the infusion of competency-based activities across different academic programs is needed. Additionally, measuring client or, in this case, "advisee," outcomes based on peer advising efforts is an area requiring further investigation. Are peer advisors effective in helping and advising their peers? If so, what activities are most helpful? These questions remain unanswered and provide a direction for further research.

A student may become so involved in peer advising activities that he or she focuses more on peer advising efforts than on concurrent course work or field activities. It is important that peer advisors receive guidance in the amount of time and effort expended on peer advising activities. Priorities must be established and adhered to during the student's peer advising stint.

With already-tight-budget constraints, finding funds to support peer advising activities will be difficult. This is a problem that parallels the world of work for many human service professionals and becomes a learning opportunity. One suggestion is to present the problem to the peer advisors and encourage them to brainstorm, select, and conduct fund-raising activities that are allowable within the institution. With proper guidance, peer advisors will creatively develop and conduct exciting events that will likely culminate into a successful, competence-building surprise.

Office space delegated for peer advising purposes has been a real benefit to the program. Human service students recognize this office and think of it as the hub from which the peer advising activities emanate. Prior to acquiring the present space, peer advisors shared one office with three other people and programs. It wasn't ideal; but many resources were housed there, and much of the planning and coordinating efforts were successfully conducted from this cramped workspace. Also, finding a peer advising student skilled in Web-site development has been difficult. It has become apparent that the Web-site design must take into consideration the need for minimum ongoing maintenance.

Supervising the Peer Advising program, while rewarding, also presents its own challenges. It requires planning, time, and ongoing attention. Balancing adequate guidance while sustaining peer advisor autonomy can be complex. Regular meetings among the peer advisors and the program director keep communication lines open and activities on schedule while allowing peer advisors to work as independently as possible. The following key considerations have been used to facilitate effective communication:
- **Scheduled meetings** ensure a group setting to generate ideas, clarify ideas and roles, solve problems, solicit support, delegate duties, reestablish time lines, monitor progress, maintain accountability, and celebrate accomplishments.
- **Model a productive meeting** by requesting agenda items, providing a written agenda, and disseminating minutes. Provide structure at each meeting and provide students with examples of effective and efficient meetings.
- **Create a role for each peer advisor** during the meeting. Roles include a facilitator (keeps conversation on task with agenda), secretary (takes minutes, ensures accuracy, and disperses typed minutes within one week following the meeting), timekeeper (ensures we are pacing ourselves so as to address and discuss all agenda items within a pre-established meeting time frame), and critical thinker (person who is expected to ask challenging questions to force us to critically evaluate our ideas and decisions). All peer advisors are also expected to act in the role of idea generator (generate ideas and suggestions to accomplish goals in creative ways). The director assumes the role of taskmaster (ensures accountability by establishing a time line and appoints a lead person for each activity).

In conclusion, advising for students from a variety of disciplines is an important aspect of the university learning experience in all academic institutions. Traditional models are constrained and do not always accurately reflect the climate and values of all academic programs, especially one as broad based as human services. An expansive peer advising model has been implemented successfully at The University of Tennessee in the Human Service Program. Meaningful peer advising activities provide human service students with a unique, highly structured, faculty-supervised learning opportunity in which the students cocreate and codire their own learning activities, which directly prepares them for future work as a human service professional. Peer advising provides a flexible model in which creative...
services and learning related to the human service profession are accomplished. The program mutually benefits students and faculty while offering a cost-efficient alternative instructional and service opportunity. This model is especially appropriate for human service majors who wish to grow professionally, have a natural desire to assist others, and want to contribute to their human service program.

References


Students, Agencies, and Academia: Goodness of Fit?
Lynne A. Kellner and Janel Lucas

Abstract

Although many resources exist to help the student select field placements in an assertive and informed manner, little is written about the impact of cultural and economic factors on the field of human services and how these factors affect an agency's ability to train interns. In these changing times, many undergraduate students are only beginning to understand the vast web in which human services is provided. It becomes incumbent upon the field-placement or practicum coordinator to help the student navigate the system while searching for a good fit for placement. The field-placement coordinator must work with prospective supervisors to help them see ways of integrating interns into agencies that are placing increasing demands on their staffs for productivity, accountability, and profitability.

Introduction

Since the early 1990s, we have witnessed many changes in the human services field. One such change is the increasing diversity of students and clients who have needs and expectations that present uncharted territory to mainstream agencies, students, and academics in the United States. Another change is that caused by the growth of managed care, with its emphasis on productivity, accountability, and liability in financial rather than humanistic terms, and the consequent effect on mental health agencies' willingness to accept student interns.

On the other hand, in today's market, universities and colleges compete for students. Leaders at academic institutions feel pressure to provide cutting-edge programs that interest potential students. Usually, these programs are consistent with the needs and direction of the human services field, but
sometimes they are not. For example, the field of creative arts therapy is a growing area that increasingly attracts students; however, given the dearth of established art therapy programs in agencies and art therapists employed in human services, finding supervising art therapists is challenging.

Given these changes, a number of issues present themselves for exploration: In essence, what does the current environment of human services mean for the fit among students, agencies and academia? How can field-placement coordinators optimize the goodness-of-fit for the student and remain sensitive and responsive to the needs of agencies and educational institutions? How can supervisors mentor students adequately? To attempt to answer these questions, two field-placement coordinators evaluated existing programs through the goodness-of-fit perspective and examined the relationships among students, agencies, and academia.

The Changing Nature of the Field

In searching for an internship or practicum, students have access to many good resources. Morrissette (1998) suggested that "in being proactive, students engage in a self-reflection process, review appropriate documentation, visit prospective internship sites, evaluate prospective colleagues and supervisor(s), and clarify internship responsibilities" (p. 50). Several authors have suggested questions for students to consider while evaluating placement options (Faiver, Eisengart, & Colonnia, 1994; Imel, 1992; Stanton & Ali, 1994; Wilson, 1981) because compatible learning styles (Kolb, 1984) may ensure a good fit between student and supervisor. While the literature provides some direction, we wonder whether students and supervisors might benefit by analyzing how cultural and economic factors affect placements.

Most notably, the fiscal constraints of the early 21st century mental health workplace have changed the delivery of services and training available at human service agencies. On the economic front, fewer dollars are allocated to mental wellness programs. "At the beginning of the 1990s, the Mass Department of Mental Health's budget was thirty million less than the previous year's appropriation" (Bocage, Homonoff, & Riley, 1995, p. 701). On the cultural front, we are experiencing a shift in beliefs about the nature of mental, mood, and behavioral disorders. At the beginning of the 20th century, the dominant culture in the U.S. is shifting from the illness model under professional and agency control toward the crime model under corporate and judicial control (Mizrahi, 1999).

For human service agencies, this change translates to fewer services for fewer clients and more means testing or other narrow criteria to decide who receives services. Some agencies increasingly rely on grants for special populations. General client services are limited under a privatization model. In other agencies, specialized services replace more generalized services. For example, in a specialized school setting, the art therapist is replaced by an art teacher who serves in an educational rather than a therapeutic capacity, thus limiting the internship options for students in art therapy.

From a systemic model (Bateson, 1987), we can anticipate that increased expectations on staff in human services agencies will trickle down to interns. Given the change from a humanistic to a business paradigm, agency staffs view the value of an intern and the trade-offs of supervision time differently than they did previously. The student as novice who gains exposure in the classroom and further develops knowledge and skills on site is now evaluated in economic terms: Will the intern bring in money to the agency, or will the agency lose money by allowing the internship?

Out of financial necessity, agency leaders are changing their services and, consequently, the cultures within which students train. Observe the climate, focus, and discussions that permeate human service work today. How frequently are conversations about money compared with those about authenticity, therapy, healing, or other values that are the foundations of effective helping services? We are in danger of replacing the humanistic underpinnings of service with the bottom-line dollar as the driving force in the field.

Agencies may no longer be able to use students in roles that are not reimbursable or may opt to take graduate students rather than undergraduates. Funders increasingly micromanage agencies' resources and services. While agencies remain firmly committed to student development, student training may take a back seat to agency viability.

Today, many human service workers feel uncertainty about the field and job security. Though master's level clinicians (typically supervisors of undergraduate students) are expected to maintain high rates of productivity (defined as client-contact hours), many factors affect their ability to meet those standards. Insurance companies merge or are bought out, and providers spend hours filling out paperwork to continue seeing their clients. In one instance, providers in Maryland, Virginia, and Washington, D.C., had a month to complete the myriad of forms necessary to continue to receive referrals and payments after a consolidation (Managed Care, 1998). Although these changes do not directly affect interns, they do affect their supervisors.

With so much uncertainty in the field, turf wars develop, and the unsuspecting student can walk into a minefield. Mehr (1998) pointed out:

Psychologists are seeking medication prescription privileges in an ongoing contest with psychiatrists, both psychologists and social workers are seeking hospital admission privileges, and nurses wish to expand their right to practice health care independent of physicians. All these groups, in addition, seek to limit others from expanding their roles. (p. 47)

With all this in-fighting, the master's level clinician (supervisor) can feel vulnerable. How can we expect the student to be mentored well? A pressing
need exists for the illumination of the relationship between universities and field agencies (Bogo & Globerman, 1999). Given the aforementioned issues, the ecological model provides an appropriate framework to explore students', supervisors', and academics' roles.

The Ecological Perspective and Goodness-of-Fit

The ecological perspective by Germain & Gitterman (1996) assesses the fit between the person and his or her environment. A goodness-of-fit model for students, agencies, and academia asks:

- How do the members of this triad complement one another in the development of shared values, knowledge, and skills?
- What expectations do students, agencies, and academia have for themselves and each other?
- How do current contextual issues affect the fit of students, agencies, and academia?
- How can agencies and academia collaborate to optimize student learning in this environment?

In order to assess the goodness-of-fit between students, agencies, and academia, input from each of these perspectives is required. Data from students and agency supervisors were gathered to help understand their perceptions of the role of the institutions in facilitating goodness of fit in placements.

Method

To answer these questions and to explore the complex relationships among students, agencies, and academia, two field-placement coordinators conducted a survey of students and agency supervisors at two northeastern colleges (one private, one public). The coordinators sought answers to questions about the skills needed for the 21st century human service worker and the ways in which institutions can better respond to changes necessitated by shifts in population and an increasing emphasis on economics. They sent surveys to 90 students at a variety of sites, including health clinics and hospitals, family and social service agencies, day care centers, schools and after-school programs, adolescent and adult residential treatment facilities, shelters, hotlines, community centers, and adjudication facilities (jails, courts, probation offices).

The survey consisted of four Likert-type scales (1 = not at all, 2 = poorly, 3 = adequately, 4 = well, 5 = very well) and six open-ended questions. The survey addressed a variety of factors related to agencies' interactions with students and academic institutions. With respect to useable surveys, the sample included 28 supervisors and 60 students in placements at the various sites. To explore the goodness-of-fit among students, agencies, and academia, the coordinators performed several standard statistical analyses.

Likert-type questions were analyzed using t-tests, Pearson's Correlations, and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA). The open-ended questions were analyzed using the principles of content analysis (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Miles & Huberman, 1984; Patton, 1989). For the purposes of this paper, the term field placement is used as a generic term to describe all field-based learning opportunities.

Results

Supervisors' Perspectives

The survey of supervisors discerned their expectations about interns. The content analysis revealed the following categories of basic office and professional skills as high priorities for supervisors. Rank ordered, these were:

- Basic office, organizational, and phone skills (6);
- Computer literacy (5);
- Good judgment and problem-solving skills (2).

On a more clinical note, supervisors valued an intern's respect for the given population and the ability to empathize (8). Additionally, supervisors highlighted personal characteristics, such as flexibility and cooperativeness (5), a friendly personality (4), presenting a professional image (2), dependability (2), nurturance (2), and maturity (1).

Almost one third (10) preferred interns who already had skills specific to the target population. Almost one fourth named specific skills, such as crisis intervention, conflict resolution or group process skills, while 5 reported a good grasp of basic counseling and listening skills as essential. Some supervisors focused more on a solid theoretical understanding of human services and psychology (7) while others (7) preferred that the coursework pertain to the target population or tasks of the placement. Despite the emphasis on specific and advanced skills, supervisors still placed the highest values on a student's willingness to learn and initiate (12).

Many supervisors expect interns to function as junior staff soon after beginning their placements; eight specifically cited interns as "filling roles of staff." Nine supervisors mentioned that the students had taken on administrative or supervisory functions during their placements.

Both supervisors and students were asked a series of questions about student preparation for the field. We used an independent t-test to ascertain differences in mean levels of agreement between supervisors and students regarding how well-prepared students were for their field experiences; three fourths (71%) of supervisors and students agreed that their academic institution had evaluated students well or very well for placement. The mean level of agreement for supervisors regarding student preparation for placement was 3.6, compared to students' at 4.3. Although supervisors felt that students were slightly less prepared than students perceived themselves to be, this difference was not statistically significant (t = -3.41, p = .93). Thus, essentially, supervisors and students agreed about student readiness for the field.

An ANOVA measured the relationship of student assessment to supervisors' ability to prepare students for the realities of human service
work. Supervisors who felt that students were well assessed for placement by their academic institution were more likely to feel that they were able to appropriately prepare students for the field ($n = 26, F = 23.7, p < .001$). This finding highlights the importance of (a) academic liaisons’ understanding of students’ and agencies’ strengths and limitations and (b) understanding the importance of not only matching students and agencies, but to the extent possible, student and supervisor.

When asked if our curriculum covers the necessary skills that today’s intern need, seven supervisors found it adequate, while three were unfamiliar with curriculum details. Two commented that students should be prepared for “the real world of human services,” but did not elaborate. As noted, six said students should have more advanced or specialized skills.

**Students’ Perspectives**

Students were asked to evaluate their perceptions of supervisors’ response to their learning needs. Of the students, 53 (88%) felt that their supervisors understood their goals well or very well. Students were also asked to rank their perceptions about the amount of emphasis that supervisors placed on several skills developed in the field, compared with the focus they would place on these skills. Of the respondents, 35 (58%) felt that generally they and their supervisors placed similar emphasis on a variety of skills or did not answer this question. The remaining 25 (42%) felt there was a discrepancy between their supervisors’ focus and their own. Forty-one (68%) of the students felt that their supervisors placed less emphasis on counseling skills than they would have liked. Similarly, 34 (56%) of the students felt that supervisors emphasized administrative skills more than they did. Additionally, 24 (40%) of the students felt that their supervisors also placed a higher emphasis on organizational issues compared with the focus they would have preferred.

Thus, the data suggested a mixed picture regarding supervisor and student relationships. While students felt that, overall, their supervisors understood well what it is that they need and want, many felt that the application of their learned skills is away from their professional development needs toward skills that are perceived to be in the service of agencies’ needs. This discrepancy may also be viewed as supervisors’ understanding of the current state of the field and the required skills for the workplace.

**Faculty Liaison Role**

Students’ field experiences do not reside just within the relationship between students and their supervisors. Faculty liaisons often work more closely with the student and supervisor both before and after a student is placed in the agency. Supervisors were asked to comment on faculty liaisons’ roles. Of the respondents, 19 (68%) felt that the institution’s faculty liaison understood their agency’s needs well or very well. As was true about student assessment, supervisors who felt that academic liaisons understood their agencies well were more likely to feel that they could adequately prepare students for human service work ($n = 26, f = 34.7, p < .001$).

Pearson’s correlations were used to further define the role faculty liaisons play in students’ field experiences. There was a moderate correlation between liaisons’ ability to understand an agency’s needs and how well students had been assessed for readiness to enter the field ($n = 26, r = .48, p < .001$). Liaisons’ understanding of field agencies was also moderately related to supervisors’ ability to prepare students for the realities of human service work ($n = 26, r = .48, p < .01$). In other words, the more clearly the liaison understands the agency and is able to assess or facilitate the student’s role in the agency, the more likely the supervisor is able to appropriately prepare the student for work in the field.

These data suggest that the liaison’s understanding of the student and the agency is vital to successful student placements. The data also highlight the usefulness of the ecological perspective in assessing student placements and delineate the recursive relationship between academic institutions, the field, and students. We were not surprised that, as an extension of the academic institution, faculty liaisons play such a role in students’ field experiences. Supervisors similarly play an important part in the fit between students, academia, and the field.

**Supervisors’ Perspectives Regarding Enhancing Goodness-of-Fit**

Supervisors acknowledged that sometimes the demands of the workplace (3) and staff shortages (2), unstable working environments (1), and concern for liability issues (1) are challenges to providing consistent supervision. Despite these constraints, many mentioned the positive qualities that interns bring to agencies. In particular, supervisors appreciated that students were dependable (3), knowledgeable (3), eager to learn (3), well prepared (2), hardworking (2), and flexible (2). Other qualities mentioned included intelligence, patience, conscientiousness, good observations skills, and the ability to integrate theory and practice and personal values. Despite the many constraints supervisors feel on their time, they continue to welcome interns into their agencies. It appears that the enthusiasm and fresh perspectives interns bring help rejuvenate supervisors, and many of them enjoy the role of mentor.

Five supervisors responded that they were “very satisfied” with their present relationships with the two institutions, and six requested that we “keep sending qualified students.” Not surprisingly, seven cited communication as essential (including providing advance notice of upcoming placement deadlines, and orienting students to the agencies beforehand through information dispersal). Three felt that the institutions’ restraints on placements (either number of hours allotted, number of semesters, or duties performed) negatively affected their ability to integrate students; generally the more flexibility the student had, the happier the supervisor.

Other than the curriculum adaptations, supervisors suggested that the colleges could support their work by providing something for their clients,
such as an informational talk. One of the colleges has allowed an agency to use the school’s interviewing lab with the one-way mirror for additional training opportunities for their staff. Similarly, supervisors were appreciative of the perks they received, such as tuition vouchers.

Discussion and Recommendations

**Goodness-of-Fit Between Academia and the Field.**

While all the skills mentioned by supervisors are important and consistent with our expectations of students, interns must also have opportunities to develop the character values of the profession: patience, empathy, self-awareness, a belief in the capacity of individuals to change, acknowledgment of and sensitivity to diversity, and the rejection of stereotypes (Schram & Mandell, 2000). While academics must be aware of agencies’ expectations for interns, we, nevertheless, are responsible for upholding the ideals of our fields, whether they be social work, psychology, human services, criminal justice, or a like discipline. Pre-internship curricula ought to include opportunities for students to articulate and identify values. Students ought to face problems in the classroom and in practica that clarify challenges to sustaining those values. They need opportunities to challenge their convictions and ideals and practice in the courage it will take to hold humanistic values primary when they are buried beneath a mound of paperwork and face social forces that seem to define money as more valuable than human beings.

To us, it was no surprise that supervisors enjoyed their roles as mentors. Interns who bring optimism, faith in humanity, hope, and enthusiasm to their learning experiences can, by the very nature of those attributes, provoke a feeling of renewal among supervisors dealing with the accumulated debris of the “real world” of human service work. This relationship exchange is not often seen for the value it is.

Advanced skills and exposure to specialized populations are covered as part of the general study in the human services curriculum; however, students rarely attain expert levels of experience and knowledge during their school years. When agencies are short-staffed, students may be put in roles either well beyond or inappropriate to their professional capacity; they may be expected to function as either experienced clinicians or clerical staff. At best, these job roles can provide teaching moments for students, supervisors, and academics if communication is fluid in the triad. At worst, this situation can harm clients and students.

The data in this study support other empirical findings by Bogo and Power (1992) that suggest field instructors play a key role in students’ positive experiences and that the most important influence on the student’s professional development is the practicum. Field-placement coordinators must continue the discussions with supervisors to understand their needs and prepare students for the environment they will enter. We must also work with site supervisors to help them understand our expectations and find creative ways to meet them.

**What Placement Coordinators Can Do**

We can enhance the fit between students and agencies by helping students understand where they are on the continuum of professional development and what constraints limit agencies’ abilities to provide learning opportunities. Some students expect experiences that are improbable, given agency constraints. In those cases, the students’ expectations have to change or another placement must be found. For example, because a student’s hours as group leader are not reimbursable by insurance, the student may instead observe the group, co-facilitate, or help with organizational tasks, such as setting up the room, providing telephone reminders, writing progress notes, and doing follow up. While these tasks provide important learning opportunities, they often are not what the student expected by the phrase “be involved with leading a group.”

We must also be aware that some students’ expectations of an internship are lower than either their abilities or the capacity of an agency to make use of them. As Morissette (1998) pointed out, “Students may underestimate their potential contributions because they lack confidence and experience in the human service profession” (p. 51). While trying to present as a human services professional, students may not know how to portray past work or volunteer experiences. Field coordinators, supervisors, and faculty liaisons can help the student to articulate these by asking the following question:

> Often there are things that we do, or enjoy doing, that don’t fit into the neat little categories on a résumé. Yet many of these things we bring to our work with clients. Do you have any special skills, abilities, or interests that might be helpful in working with the elderly, children, prisoners, or other special populations?

This question unveils unsuspected talents and skills. For example, one intern rather self-consciously revealed her 10-year career as a professional clown. Because she was interviewing for a placement working with preschool children, her clowning experience was viewed as an asset by the prospective supervisor, much to the student’s surprise.

**What Students Can Do**

During the placement process, the question of how supervision will take place should be addressed directly. A student may check in 10 minutes in the morning and again at lunchtime or at the end of the day. Over a course of a week, this schedule can easily meet the required hour of supervision. The danger in this routine is that the student may report to the supervisor, merely detailing progress on tasks or clients, rather than receive the education, challenges, and mentoring of quality supervision. In some instances, group rather than individual supervision makes sense; while in others, supervision through a faculty member, in addition to the usual seminar experience, best
serves the student's learning needs. The following questions may help students focus their interviews and better assess what the supervisory relationship will be like:

- Do you anticipate any mergers in your agencies? If so, how would that affect my internship? Would there be any changes in supervision?
- Is there any reason to believe that you (supervisor) will not be able to supervise me for the duration of the internship?
- Will there be other interns here at the same time? (Provides for group learning activities and peer support.)
- Are there constraints on what kinds of duties I can perform based on agency policy or mandates from funding sources?
- The college requires that I receive a minimum of an hour a week of supervision. How do you see us doing that here at (agency name)?
- Are there group supervision or team meetings in which I could take part?
- Will I work only under your supervision or will there be someone else to whom I report?
- And (privately), the intern must ask himself or herself: "Can I work with this person?"

**Supervisor and Placement Coordinator Collaboration**

The field-placement coordinator and the potential supervisor can brainstorm ways to integrate the intern's skills and interests with the needs of the agency. For example, in one program serving severely troubled adolescents, interns were presented as "therapists' helpers." The interns helped clients fill out forms required by the funding source, helped schedule appointments with other providers, and were available as a bridge when the therapist was not available. Another student helped update a resource referral book; a third interviewed clients and collected data for a survey for the funding source.

Most supervisors dream of projects they do not have the time or complete. This benefits the intern as well, who can carve out a place within the agency. Williams' (1995) classification of the supervisor as teacher, facilitator, consultant, and evaluator is useful in understanding that time is essential for developing the mentor role. Relaying information in the teacher role can mean to focus more on understanding his or her interaction with the client, the agency, or outside providers, the facilitative relationship allows for inclusion of personal material. This can only emerge if the supervisory relationship has been one of trust and availability. Williams suggested the consultant role as a flexible position that allows for the influence of the supervisor to enter the system, as well. This can be helpful when a family is receiving multiple services. The intern is often most aware, and anxious about, the supervisor's role as evaluator. For this process to be growth promoting rather than intimidating, the supervisor must have the time to provide ongoing feedback rather than just a performance review. With the exception of the teacher role, the supervisor must develop a relationship grounded in trust so that the student is willing to offer personal material that may help him or her work through difficulties with clients and further define him- or herself as a worker.

Given the many demands on supervisors, students and field coordinators must find those who truly want to mentor a student rather than those who want "free labor." Identifying the supervisor who is looking for free help or who is burnt-out is not always easy at the onset of the internship relationship; however, answers to the following questions may elicit the clues that predict the kind of relationship a student will experience:

- Is the intern accepted to fill the place of a staff member who left, was fired, or is out on maternity leave?
- If so, what is the supervisor's commitment to teaching and training versus merely getting free labor?
- What is the orientation process?
- Does orientation allow time for the student to get on board, or will the student be required to fill an employee role quickly?
- If junior staff provide supervision, will senior staff support and guide them?

Because the field-placement coordinator is more adept at feeling out this situation than most students, he or she must maintain close communication with agencies to help a student answer these questions.

During conversations with supervisors, supervisors, themselves, have suggested ways in which colleges could share their expertise. Some supervisors preferred supervisory trainings for new supervisors, agency trainings, or continuing education opportunities. Faculty may be guest speakers or help with research or evaluation projects that might be integrated into a course. Despite time constraints, field instructors also see the opportunity to teach in the classroom as an occasional guest lecturer as a reward (Bennett & Coe, 1998).

**Conclusion**

As we have seen, the field of human services continues to undergo changes that strongly affect our populations, our agencies, our students, our institutions, and, therefore, our goodness-of-fit. As practicum or field-placement coordinators, we are in a position to affect this fit; however, this means that we must think creatively about student training and development.

We are all challenged to reexamine our goals and expectations of the field, our students, and ourselves. While holding to our expectations, we must also find ways to help agency supervisors who want to mentor students to think outside the box while living in the boxes created by policy and financial constraints. Through increased development of students' skills, as well as support, flexibility, and collaboration with our agencies, we can continue to
provide students with quality field experiences, despite the contextual forces that threaten our coexistence.

References


So You Want to Major in Human Services: An Exploration of Students' Motivations

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Abstract

Student essays, a component of the progression to the human service major at a southeastern university, were analyzed by the researchers to identify motivations for pursuing a major in human services. Four major themes emerged from multiple readings of the essays: the self, personal experiences, goals, and program/curriculum. Findings are consistent with current career-development theories. Two subthemes unique to these participants were religion and working with individuals who are deaf.

Work is an important part of the human experience. Whether it is a job, occupation, or career, for most individuals, being employed meets many of their economic, social, and psychological goals. Earning a wage often provides resources to procure the basic needs of food, clothing, and shelter. Work also offers opportunities to learn new skills or develop competencies that are used, in turn, to advance to jobs with more status or a higher salary. Many times employment helps individuals to develop self-assurance, a sense of worthiness, and self-efficacy since they are able to care for themselves and, often, others. In western culture, the high value placed on work and working encourages people to define who they are in terms of the jobs they hold and the work they do.

Work within the human service sector has a specific professional focus that makes it a distinct profession. According to Burger and Youkeles (2000), "Human service workers deal with issues, problems, or concerns that affect people literally from the cradle to the grave" (p. 1). The focus of the human service enterprise, and the professionals who work within it, is to improve the lives of individuals and communities and to empower others to help...
themselves. Much of the work is conducted within the context of the helping relationship.

One of the critical components of establishing and maintaining a helping relationship is the helper’s use of self. This means the helper harnesses his or her own unique set of beliefs, values, motivations, self-awareness, and sense of self-worth for use within the helping relationship. The impetus for choosing work in the human services, as part of the self just described, is important to explore. This motivation influences expectations about what it will be like to be a human service professional, as well as expectations about working with clients (Burger & Youkeles, 2000; Neukrug, 1999; Woodside & McClam, 2002).

Because of the influence of motivation on the helping process, it is important to understand why students choose to focus on preparing for the helping professions. Understanding the range and complexity of student reasons for choosing human services as a career path helps educators plan curriculum that will facilitate students’ examination of their reasons and determine their positive and negative implications.

The purpose of the present study was to identify the motivations of postsecondary students pursuing a major in human services. The study was qualitative in design to capture the voice of students as they wrote about why they chose the human service major. It addressed their reasons as part of self-awareness, helper characteristics, and helping philosophies and helped clarify them. This article reviews relevant vocational theories, reports the results of an analysis of students’ essays, and discusses the implications for human service education.

**Vocational Theories**

Since work is a primary responsibility of adults in this culture, several theoretical approaches posit hypotheses about how individuals make career choices. These approaches represent three categories: structural, process, and constructivist (Straby, 2001). The structural approaches attribute the choices to the person and the work and look for ways in which these two are integrated. For example, Strong (Donnay, 1997) and Holland (1994) believe that individuals look for a good fit when they choose their jobs or vocations. Both use testing to link individuals to particular jobs or job clusters. The Strong Interest Inventory describes an individual’s interests and then delineates jobs a person with that pattern of interest might choose. The Holland Vocational Preference Inventory presents six categories, each a unique combination of traits. Categories such as realistic, intellectual, and social are correlated with recommended occupations.

The process approaches posit that career development occurs over time following tasks that support career decision-making. Ginzberg (1972) and Super (1994) present models of career development based upon the lifespan or life-space approach. For Ginzberg, career choices begin as early as childhood. Preadult decision-making includes the stages of fantasy, tentative, and realistic. The realistic stage, occurring in late adolescence and early and middle adulthood, includes exploring alternatives, making a firm commitment to a job or profession, and implementing this commitment. Super believed that career choice occurs throughout the life span and is influenced by unique individual characteristics, level of maturity, influence of the social context, and pressures of other responsibilities.

Another process-related approach is the social cognitive career theory developed by Lent, Brown, and Brenner (2001) that focuses on the sequence of learning experience in determining vocational choices. Learning experiences, which include gender-role socialization, help determine how individuals see themselves. These self-perceptions, in turn, influence interests. According to this model, interests then influence goals and actions related to career decision making. Microeconomics defines career choices as decisions based upon a series of choices made over time (Behrman, Kletzer, McPherson, & Schapiro, 1998). According to this theory, the process is a linear one, and decisions can be represented by a time line. The traits and characteristics an individual has today are partly based upon past choices. Today’s traits and characteristics influence future prospects and alternatives. Within the microeconomic model, personal and family background, combined with current and future economic trends, form the basis of career choice.

Within the constructivist approach, people, individually and collectively, construct their own reality, hence the career-development process occurs within each individual. Self-evaluation and knowledge of interests provide important information for persons as they develop their own career goals and professional sense of self. Neimeyer developed a view of the vocational construct system by outlining four stages of individual career growth. In this system, the individual begins with a very undifferentiated sense of career and self and concludes with an understanding that is both well developed and clear. Using the constructivist perspective, the individual is also seen as a storyteller, and career development becomes a narrative of who the individual becomes the author; the environment in which the individual lives determines the setting; the individual’s experiences represent the action; and the individual’s abilities, friends, family, or employers function as the instruments of the drama or story (Jurgens, 2002).

Each of these three described approaches indicate that career decisions involve a decision made, a choice determined, and action taken, thus representing the commitment to a job or profession and implementation of a plan to prepare for that job. Within the context of postsecondary education, one significant step in career decision making occurs when students first determine where they will attend school. Another comes when they choose a major. At most, the choice of one’s major defines a primary area of study; and, for many, it represents specific professional preparation. Both of these steps represent a link between motivation and goal achievement, in other words, taking specific action to reach a particular goal. According to Ginzberg (1972), declaring a major represents one component of the realistic phase of decision making. Microeconomic theory suggests that the choice of a major becomes
part of a series of decisions that lead an individual to a career choice (Turner & Bowen, 1999). Therefore, choice of the major is both the result of previous choices and an influence on future choices.

Choice of Major

Although there is little research that investigates why students choose to major in human services, Collins, Fischer, and Cimmino (1994) investigated patterns of influence on the career choice of human service students. They found three patterns: parental issues (e.g., addiction and emotional problems), abusive relationships experienced by the students, and disruptive influences in nuclear and extended family members (e.g., suicide ideation and divorce). Other researchers have explored the reasons that individuals choose specific majors or areas of study in other helping professions, for example, medicine, the ministry, education, and social work. Results indicate that students are drawn to a specific area or major because of their perspective of the lifestyle (Kirchner & Owen, 1996), the client group and the setting (Woodside & McClam, 2002), their cultural background (Jones, Young, & Rodriguez, 1999), and personal and family experiences and influences (Biggerstaff, 2000). These reasons often have strengths and weaknesses (Woodside & McClam), adding to the importance of choice of major.

Also influencing the selection of a major or area of study is career choice. Results of several studies indicate relationships between major and career choice and internal characteristics (e.g., personality attributes, interests, values, and dispositions) and external characteristics (e.g., levels of parents' education, gender, and gender typing; LeFrancois, 1999).

The present study focused specifically on motivations to choose the human service major at a 4-year institution. Although choice of major and career in helping professions has received some attention, no known study to date has targeted this major and these participants. Given the generalist orientation of human service programs and subsequent job placement in settings as diverse as correctional facilities, schools, state hospitals, mental health centers, nursing homes, crisis intervention units, and fund-raising organizations, among others (Woodside & McClam, 2002), these results should be of interest to both educators and employers.

Method

The subjects for this study were 108 students at a state university in the southeastern United States who were admitted to the major in human services during a 4-year period from 1998 to 2001. Students were contacted by letter for their consent to participate in the study; 71 students (66%) responded affirmatively.

The major, begun in 1972, is concerned with a comprehensive and interdisciplinary approach to the study, understanding, and resolution of problems, both individual and societal. The human service major currently offers two concentrations. The generalist concentration is for those who wish to work as a helping professional with various client groups or with a range of individual and social problems. The educational interpreting concentration provides the education and training essential for those wishing to specialize in work with individuals who are deaf.

The human service program has a progression process in place to screen applicants for suitability to the major. The process includes an application, a one-page essay, an official transcript, and a panel interview. The focus of this study was the one-page essay in which students relate their reasons for pursuing this major. Instructions to students are to submit a typewritten essay, limited to 500 words, discussing their reasons for desiring to major in human services.

The essays were analyzed using a method outlined by Ryan and Bernard (2000) developed for text data, focusing on collecting and analyzing words or phrases that belong to a similar domain, in this case, the answer to the question “Why do you want to major in human services?” Five steps were used in the analysis:

1. Each researcher read and reread the essays (text data) independently. The researchers collected all the similar phrases that appeared to belong together and assigned each group of phrases a name or theme.
2. The researchers met together to discuss their individual analyses. A list of themes across essays emerged from this discussion.
3. The researchers reanalyzed the data using the list of themes from Step 2 and developed a list of phrases that belonged in each theme.
4. The researchers met again to discuss their analyses and refine their initial list of themes. Sub-themes emerged from this discussion.
5. A final list of themes emerged from this group analysis (Ryan & Bernard, 2000).

Results

Key phrases that appeared across essays emerged from multiple readings of the papers and the identification of common themes by the researchers. Four themes described the motivations of participants in this study: (a) the self; (b) personal experiences; (c) goals; and (d) curriculum/program.

The Self

A major focus of students at the time of their progression to the major was self: what I want, how I am, and what I want to do. Within this context, students used three subthemes to discuss their desire to help others, their own personality traits, and the role of religion in their lives.

The desire to help others. Almost all participants stated in their essays the desire to help others. This was a primary reason that appeared repeatedly. Students referred to this desire with a range of emotions from “I am interested in helping people” to “I enjoy working with people” to “I have a strong desire to help others.” Others expressed it even more strongly as “I want to make a difference in the lives of others.” Explaining how they intended to help others
often followed these statements. For example, some students discussed spending time talking with people; giving advice; being an active listener; and promoting “growth, development, and maturity and to improve coping in the lives of others.” Students wrote about helping others as a calling (e.g., “I feel called to make sure no kid falls through the cracks.”) or that helping others was “meant to be.”

**Personality.** A significant subtheme of the self related to the individual’s personality. Students discussed specific attributes or qualities, matches between personality and work, and benefits they will get out of the major/career.

Many students apparently chose the major because they believed they have certain attributes, all positive, that led them to a match with the major. Examples include the following: optimistic; resourceful; humanistic way of thinking; sober, pragmatic view of people; empathy; nurturing personality; outgoing and personable; and getting along well with others.

Some students responded in a more general sense. Rather than stating specific qualities, they explained that their personalities matched human service work. For example, “My personality reflects that I enjoy being around people” and “My personality calls for me to help others.” Essays frequently addressed how students thought they would benefit from this type of study and work. These included satisfaction, fulfillment, peace, purpose, and happiness.

**Religion.** Students mentioned religion, faith, and God specifically in their essays as the impetus for choosing human services: “I am very eager and excited about what my future holds and where God will lead me!” Others alluded to religion by stating, “I am blessed,” or “through my experience on the drama team, prayer, and much soul searching.” A worldview, with a faith-based perspective, is a cogent reason influencing these students’ desire to serve others.

### Personal Experiences

Another theme that emerged in students’ essays was in their words, “my experiences.” In describing these personal experiences, they wrote about what they “have seen” and “have experienced,” and how it influenced their choice of major. They described five subthemes. Four of these included their interactions with other helpers, the influence of volunteer experiences, the impact of previous work, and the experience of being a client. Across these four subthemes, many students included past experiences they have had learning and communicating with sign language, as well as their encounters with the deaf culture or deaf individuals. Since the use of sign language figured prominently in the theme of previous experiences, we designated it as the fifth subtheme.

**The impact of others.** Students linked their decision to major in human services to the actions of and their involvement with other individuals. Many individuals who impressed these students did so in a positive way. Negative experiences with others also influenced these students: “Me. D did not effectively handle the problems of the students or help them deal with their situations...[she] had a negative impact on my life, but I hope that I can impact high school students in a positive way.”

**Volunteer experience.** A considerable number of students talked about their previous volunteer experiences in a social service organization or agency. Although most volunteer efforts began in high school, many students began volunteering “as early as second grade.” Students described the volunteer experience as “spurring an interest,” “very positive,” and making “a contribution.” Volunteerism confirmed for them a desire to work with people and to work in the helping professions.

**Work experience.** Students described their previous work experience and its influence on their decision to major in human services. For many who had already worked in human service settings or were currently engaged in human service practice, this experience affirmed their decision to continue to work in the field. “I have the life experience and the employment history to realize what kind of contribution I want to make and how I can do so.” They wrote about the professional practice they observed — both negative and positive. “I have been on the front-line...[and have seen] a good caseworker, a bad caseworker, and a great caseworker.”

**Recipients of service.** The written essays also highlighted times when a student or family member had been a recipient of services. Some of the human service encounters they described were traumatic events or difficult, long-term situations. “I have been in the system since the day I was born...addictions, physical abuse, abandonment, and living in an alternative setting.” “I have had the unique opportunity to have had a younger brother remain in a coma for 14 years before passing away.”

**Sign language and the deaf culture.** Students learned about sign language and deaf culture through friends, family, school, church, and classes in college. Describing their introduction to sign language, they told stories of an introduction “to deaf culture from a classmate,” “a music teacher [who] taught sign language...to sing and sign our song at the Christmas program,” preparing “videos, which involved sign language to music,” and learning about sign in summer camp. Many of these students have been learning and using sign language since elementary school.

### Goals

A cluster of themes that surfaced during the essay analyses pertained to goals. Work and educational aspirations became more clear as students expressed plans for the future. Goals were couched in terms of employment objectives or pursing graduate studies for a more specialized career. Career path statements were directed toward immediate employment after graduation. Consistent with the generalist concept, a variety of career paths were represented. Such phrases as “I want to dedicate my life to helping kids in the inner city” and “My long-term goal is to run a group home for the
disabled who cannot take care of themselves or a home for battered women and children” were given. Not all students identified a preference so early in their academic pursuits. Less specific vocational goals were illustrated by more general statements (e.g., “I have always wanted to play an active role in education”).

Some students were already thinking beyond a baccalaureate degree in order to pursue certain vocational goals. “I plan to obtain an MBA in Health Planning and Administration after I complete my undergraduate studies.” They referred to the necessity of completing graduate school to fulfill their vocational aspirations.

Students pointed to the variety and breadth of human service options available within the field as a motivating factor. “I chose human services because of the broad range of opportunities it provides” and “I am choosing to pursue the human service major because of the many potentials it offers for my future endeavors.” Similar statements reflected student understanding that they would be able to work in a variety of positions across different vocational settings and suggested that students understand that a human service degree opens a variety of career options.

Curriculum/Program

A consistent theme throughout the essays centered on the human service program. Preparation, curriculum, and faculty emerged as salient topics. Preparation. Being equipped to provide the services required in their field of choice surfaced as a significant theme for choosing the major. Students perceived the major as the vehicle for vocational preparation and skill development needed for their area of interest. “I would like to strengthen my skills as a provider of services in the community,” “The preparation that the human service major will give me will equip me with skills in communicating with others...and will help me in finding new ways and ideas to help other people.”

Curriculum. Students referred to the curriculum as a motivating factor in their choice of major. One student commented that it is “a highlight of the major.” Another stated, “Human services is appropriate for me because it combines ideas from both psychology and sociology and applies to real life problems.” Others “discovered” the curriculum by perusing the undergraduate catalog and hearing about the major from advisors in other colleges.

For many students, the generalist focus of the curriculum was particularly attractive. The “wide range of courses,” “the variety of jobs,” and their field placements encouraged them “not to limit themselves. Students commented it would be better off when they graduated because they will have more opportunities in related areas of graduate study and the “enormous flexibility for career choices.”

A number of students mentioned specific courses taught by the human service faculty as significant in confirming their choice of a major. A commonality of these courses is the practical application of course concepts through participation in service learning projects, volunteer experiences, or an agency placement. One student commented that through these experiences, he/she “found a satisfaction that he/she had never experienced before.”

Faculty. Finally, the human service faculty was identified as a reason to major in human services. They provided several reasons for this, including their advising expertise, and a faculty that is “well-educated” and “seasoned.” One student pointed out that each faculty member “has worked outside the university in some realm of human service work. Faculty members are continually speaking of new articles, research, and projects in which they are involved. Their experience speaks volumes. Their guidance is from experience and knowledge, book and street smarts.” They also wrote about quality classroom instruction. Descriptors of their human service instruction included “extremely interesting,” “extremely beneficial,” and “helpful.”

Discussion

These results are consistent with current career-development theories and related research on career choice. Participants identified a major motivation as the desire to help others. Supporting this was their congruence with Strong’s and Holland’s (1994) concept of the good fit for a career. These students know the positive traits they possess, and they articulated their belief that they are well matched to work as helpers in interest, personality, and previous experiences. Interestingly, not one student mentioned money or salary.

The desire to assist others was repeated multiple times in the essays, even though participants might have been uncertain about the population with whom they want to work, the type of work they want to do, or both. Students who have themselves received services may be best described as motivated by Day’s (1994) tenet “to do for others what someone has done for me” (p.108). As students talked about why they wanted to major in human services, they discussed the influences of personal experiences in making this choice. Salient were the influences of counselors and other teachers; less obvious were the effects of family. Many talked of family support, but they did not discuss influences of parents, mothers in particular, contrary to the research conducted by O’Brien and Fassinger (1993).

Related to Ginzberg’s (1972) and Super’s (1994) lifespan perspective, students expressed early interest or exposure to human services through counselors and teachers and to American Sign Language by observing the language via classmates or interpreters. They imagined and fantasized, as children, being able to fulfill similar roles, for example, communicating and interpreting via sign language. Later, one student had tentatively pursued her dream by taking related classes at children’s summer camp and then, as a teenager, at “church youth camp.” Her more recent action, committing to the human service major, fell under the realistic stage as she seriously implemented her vocational plans.
Student volunteer and work experiences as pertinent influences point to the microeconomic perspective. These experiences directly impacted what they are doing today; this linear model describes their past and their present choice of major. Volunteer or paid work sparked an interest for them in a career in human services. For those students already working in human service settings, majoring in human services was one more step in their development as professionals.

Multiple and various job options available for human service graduates were pragmatic reasons for entering the major. The U.S. Department of Labor has forecast that service is one of the two fastest growing employment segments in the United States. Students expressed the desire to be adequately equipped to perform available human service jobs. Current economic supply and demand may very well have made an impact on career choice for these students. This provided credence for Byrner's (1997) sentiment that employment opportunities and preparedness bear weight on career choice.

Two subthemes that may be unique to this particular population of students were interpreting for the deaf and religion. Interpreting for the deaf is a concentration within the major, the only arrangement of its kind in the United States. Many students enter the major with established interest in or curiosity about sign language, working with the deaf, or both. We posit that the programmatic relationship between human services and deafness accounts for much of the student emphasis in this vocational arena, as well as the location in this area of the state school for the deaf.

The University is located in the southeastern United States in a region that is both in the Bible Belt and a part of Appalachia. The population of this region reflects a strong interest in religious affiliation, church attendance, and fundamentalist beliefs. Eighty-eight percent of the students attending the university come from a 100-mile radius of the city in which the university is located. The conservative religious culture of the region may, in part, account for the tie between religion and helping expressed in these essays.

Many of the students whose essays were analyzed had not taken many human service courses, and they had little formal understanding of the "use of self" in human service work, particularly in establishing helping relationships. Yet, as they discussed their motivation, they indicated how they would use these motivations to help others. For example, values assessments and interaction-style inventories allow students to better understand themselves. Having students share their own experiences with classmates broadens their perspectives of motivations and helps them understand the complexities of motivations that students bring to their choice of major.

Reasons for choice of occupation influence expectations for working in the human service profession and the impact it has on working with clients. The information in this study encourages us to suggest that the examination of motivation for entering the profession should be integrated into human service curriculum. There are several teaching opportunities that help human service educators explore both the presence of motivations and the issues associated with them. This begins early in an introductory human service course by simply acknowledging that the need to help others exists as a worthy tenet fundamental to human service practice. A natural progression then is to examine why individuals choose to help others; in other words, what are the specific reasons each student has chosen this work. Structured learning activities, such as values assessments and interaction-style inventories allow students to better understand themselves. Having students share their own experiences with classmates broadens their perspectives of motivations and helps build appreciations for different personalities and world views about helping.

More advanced human service courses may include developing a philosophy of helping, an activity that captures the essence of choice of major. These statements help students delineate career goals, increase self-understandings, and clarify personal beliefs. Of course volunteer and paid-work experience and internships help continue the dialogue. As students are exposed to various real-life examples of human service work, they continue to examine their reasons as they face ethical dilemmas, boundary issues, and bureaucratic challenges.

Since choices based upon religious beliefs emerged in this particular study, these issues need to be discussed in class and during advising. It is both positive and negative aspects, affecting expectations of the human services profession and their work with clients. Motivation is a part of the self that is so important when professionals work with their clients and should be an important component of professional preparation.

Knowledge about students' motivations is valuable information for human service educators and influences our curriculum planning and implementation. This study both confirms and expands our understanding of our students, their needs, and their hopes for their futures. Prior to this study, most information about motivation of students was gathered in two ways: either we engaged in one-on-one conversations with students or we engaged them in a less direct and more sporadic way as we taught our classes, worked with student groups, and engaged with students in service learning. In none of these situations did we walk away with a systematic study or reflective understanding of students' reasons for their choice of major.

This study provides us with a description that we can use in both the teaching/learning process and the advising process. As students wrote about their reasons for choosing the human service major, four major themes emerged. These four themes and their various subthemes illustrate the complexity of the motivations that students bring to their choice of major.

Implications For Human Service Education

Formal preparation for a career helping others begins with the choice of an academic major. Reasons for the choice of both the major and a career have their reasons for choosing the human service major, four major themes emerged. These four themes and their various sub-themes illustrate the complexity of the motivations that students bring to their choice of major.

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important for these students to grapple with their motivation to help and its appropriateness in human service contexts. This is especially a challenge to those who work as volunteers or have internships in local, state, and federal agencies. Clarity that providing services or helping an individual acquire services does not include proselytizing becomes an important issue to explore.

One final note, these student essays emphasized the impact that the faculty and the curriculum have upon their understanding of the helping professions and the decisions they make about their future area of study and vocational goals. Faculty words and actions expand the students’ own sense of motivation and often challenge their basic assumptions. The concept of motivation changes for all involved as faculty members bring their personal experience of human service practice into the classroom, plan service activities outside the classroom, and work side by side with students in service with others.

This research project has given the four faculty members in our human service program new insights into students’ motivations, how students choose their majors, how vocational theory relates to actually student experience, and how important motivation is in the practice of human services. The study has given us both a new appreciation of why our students are enrolled in our program and a valuable opportunity to understand that process. As individuals, this information will facilitate our teaching; as a group, it will influence our curriculum.

Since this study is descriptive in nature, it is difficult to generalize to students in other programs. Another limitation of the study is the lack of information about age, gender, and ethnicity of the participants. Further research on motivations to major in human services could address regional differences, as well as the impact of age, gender, and ethnicity.

References


Marianne Woodside, Tricia McClam, and Bob Kronick are professors and Joel Diambra is an assistant professor in the Department of Educational Psychology and Counseling at The University of Tennessee.
A Counseling and Human Services Course in Spirituality
Marti Riemer-Reiss

Abstract

A holistic, multicultural model of human services involves attending to clients’ spirituality. Therefore, it is important that students of the human services receive education related to this subject. An elective course on spirituality is described by documenting the following topics: rationale for the course, goals and educational objectives, curriculum, course assignments, guest lecturers, and student feedback. It is hoped that this course description encourages human service educators to consider offering a course related to spirituality.

Introduction

A paradigm shift that views clients holistically is occurring in the human service profession (Short & Talley, 1999). This shift involves treating the whole individual to optimize his or her ability to succeed in a competitive environment (Jenkins, Patterson, & Szymanski, 1998; Short & Talley, 1999; Trieschmann, 1995). Thus, a truly holistic model includes spirituality, as it is part of the basic human experience (Byrd, 1997; Fallot, 1998; McCarthy, 1995; Trieschmann, 1995). In order to adequately work from this model, students in the helping professions must receive education related to spirituality. This education would allow them to respond sensitively to situations involving a client’s spirituality. Thus, the main purpose of this article is to describe a counseling and human services course in spirituality.

Rationale for a Course in Spirituality

The rationale for a counseling course in spirituality is well documented (Bishop, 1995; Bussema & Bussema, 2000; Holt, Houg, & Romano, 1999; Ingersoll, 1995; Miller, 1999; Miranti & Burke, 1995; Nosek & Hughes, 2001; Pate & Bondi, 1995; Piedmont, 2001; Trieschmann, 2001). The following
justification applies to all fields involved in helping human beings. First, a multicultural perspective to helping values the client's spiritual beliefs as important aspects of his or her culture (Bishop, 1995; Pate & Bondi, 1995; Schulte, Skinner, & Claborn, 2002). Therefore, human service professionals must be aware of spiritual concerns as a component of their clients’ values and worldviews. Second, a high percentage of Americans consider themselves to be spiritual (Gallup, 1995; Gallup & Castelli, 1989; Hastings & Hastings, 1996). Thus, the spiritual dimension would apply across all human service fields. Third, people who seek assistance from professionals, in particular, often contemplate their spirituality during the time of extreme emotions, which often accompanies this phase in their lives. Fourth, there are times when counseling and human service professionals cannot be effective because of unresolved spiritual issues in their own lives. Therefore, before professionals inquire about their clients' spirituality, they must become aware of their own spiritual beliefs and values (Miller, 1999; Miranti & Burke, 1995). It is important that human service professionals are capable of assessing the situations in which spirituality may not be the most appropriate approach to take. Hence, students in helping fields must be taught to discern the quality of a client’s spiritual path in relation to his or her final goal (Ingersoll, 1997).

Although spiritual values and beliefs are thought to be major life components of individuals who seek counseling and human services, the field has neglected to recognize this factor (Bussena & Bussema, 2000; Byrd, 1997; Ingersoll, 1995). Perhaps the spiritual dimension is ignored because educators consider spirituality primarily the domain of religion. In the Western world, scientists always focused on biology, while religious leaders focused on spirituality (Patterson, Hayworth, Turner, & Raskin, 2000). However, there are clear distinctions between religion and spirituality that have been documented throughout time. Religion is addressed as a specific allegiance to the beliefs and practices of institutional, organized creeds (Hauger, 1993). However, spirituality denotes a more universal phenomenon among all people and that finds a variety of expressions in the search for meaning in life (Patterson et al., 2000). When helping professionals reject the reality of spirituality, they reject their client’s values, ideas, and meaning in the world (Schaff, 1992). However, due to a lack of training experience, many professionals feel uncomfortable addressing spirituality (Patterson et al., 2000). Therefore, counseling and human service programs should consider addressing spiritual issues in their course offerings in order to fully prepare their students.

This article describes an elective course titled “Spirituality and Counseling.” The course was taught to counseling and human service students during an intensive interim session at a state university. Due to the fact that this course was not offered in the graduate curriculum, both undergraduate and graduate students were permitted to take it. The graduate students were required to complete additional assignments, and they formed a small group for experiential discussions. The available demographics of the class were as follows: (a) 18 undergraduate students and 8 graduate students, (b) 14 human service majors and 12 counseling majors, and (c) 21 females and 5 males.

In general, the philosophy of this course focused on multicultural awareness with an understanding of the diversity of spirituality. The fundamentals of spirituality, such as definitions, history, assessment, and ethical concerns were taught via a didactic mode. Further, personalized experiential learning took place in order to allow student self-awareness, which would facilitate the understanding of clients' spirituality issues. Other techniques included the use of case studies, small-group activities, and spiritual and religious leaders as guest presenters.

The purpose of this article is to provide human service educators (HSEs) with a framework for a course on spirituality. This document is intended to be useful to educators who are considering teaching such a course. To adequately describe the course, this article is organized in the following sections: goals and educational objectives, curriculum, course assignments, guest lecturers, and student feedback.

Goals and Educational Objectives

The goals of the Spirituality and Counseling course were to: (a) examine spirituality as a useful component of working with clients seeking counseling, (b) offer descriptions of spirituality and religion and the distinctions between the two, (c) discuss assessment tools that explore clients' spirituality, and (d) investigate the history of spirituality in counseling.

After completing this course, students should be able to: (a) demonstrate a fundamental understanding of the development of spirituality in the counseling profession, (b) demonstrate a basic awareness of several spirituality models, (c) demonstrate an appreciation of the challenge involved in integrating spirituality into the counseling/human services profession, (d) understand cultural expressions of spirituality, and (e) articulate an understanding of their own spirituality and its development.

As a precursor to this course, general information on the nature, format, and content was discussed with the students. For instance, students were initially informed that the course philosophy was one that promoted acceptance of diversity and inclusiveness. Next, discussion was held on the significance of valuing many cultural and spiritual perspectives. Finally, students were informed of the experiential emphasis in the course, which required self-exploration and sharing. Because of this experiential emphasis, ethical procedures regarding confidentiality were reviewed and students developed a list of ground rules for the class to follow.

Curriculum

The course curriculum was made up of five main topics, which corresponded with the required textbook, Counseling: The Spiritual Dimension, by Burke and Miranti (1995). Additionally, literature that related to spirituality and human services was put on reserve at the university library. The first topic was a general introduction to the course. Initially, distinctions were made...
between spirituality and religion. For instance, religion was described as adherence to the beliefs and practices of an organized church or religious institution (Green, Beinshoff, & Harris-Forbes, 2001). Whereas, spirituality was defined as an individual’s search for meaning and value in life and his or her relationship with a higher power. The common elements that exist between religion and spirituality were also discussed. An example of the interconnectedness of spirituality and religion relates to one’s meaning and purpose in life and to his or her relationship with the environment (Adams, Bezner, Drabbs, Zambarano, & Steinhardt, 2000). Experiential exercises that focused on breathing, relaxation, and self-exploration were implemented at this juncture. Finally, students completed a spiritual assessment. This assessment was made up of a series of questions developed for purposes of personal exploration, dyad sharing, and group discussion.

The second topic was related to spirituality and wellness. This section included counseling, meditation, prayer, and yoga. Literature related to wellness in human services was put on reserve at the university library to supplement the textbook. The students worked in small groups on case studies, which challenged them to integrate spirituality into hypothetical counseling scenarios. This exercise also taught the students to discriminate between integrating spirituality and asking another path in their counseling. A naturopathic doctor provided lecture and experiential exercises related to the use of meditation. Likewise, a nurse practitioner discussed yoga and allowed the students to participate in simple yoga exercises, if they choose to do so.

As part of the spirituality and wellness topic, healing and spirituality were explored. Again, students read and discussed related literature put on reserve at the university library. The students also viewed a videotaped news documentary, which reported on the use of spirituality in medical schools. Lastly, students were given the opportunity to discuss their perspectives on the use of spirituality in all healing professions.

The third topic was eastern philosophies of spirituality. Once again, the students read related literature and textbook chapters. The highlight of this section was the discussion led by three Buddhist monks. They spoke about the Buddhist philosophies and addressed numerous questions from the students. The fourth portion of this class was twofold as it addressed both ethics and spirituality. The expectation was that the students would become more open to and experienced in discussing spirituality. Following is an explanation of the assignments required of all students enrolled in this course. First, the students developed and presented pictures that represented their spiritual histories. They were given the freedom to design the most effective means of displaying their particular spiritual journeys. For instance, students developed chronological time lines, computer graphics, and scrapbooks, which displayed the spiritual paths they had taken. Additionally, students were given the opportunity to present their projects to the class. This appeared to be a powerful and dynamic exercise for the students. Each student’s spiritual journey was unique and reflective of a diversity of spiritual perspectives. However, the students also became aware of common themes demonstrated in each spiritual journey. The value of this exercise became apparent at the end of the course when four undergraduate students and one graduate student made comments reflecting the fact that they experienced a greater understanding of the trials and tribulations of being human through this exercise.

Another assignment required each student to participate in a panel of his or her choice. Topics were selected and small groups were assigned on the first day of class. The main criterion for topic selection was that the panel was to cover a significant aspect of spirituality at a greater depth than covered in the class syllabus or text. Examples of panel topics included Native American Spirituality, Women and Spirituality, and Holistic Spirituality. The panels were professionally presented, and most included props to make the experience more visual for the audience.

The final topic of the course was on Native American spirituality and drumming. This was incorporated into the course due to the large percentage of Native Americans served in the region in which the course was offered. A Native American spiritual leader led discussion on spiritual practices among this group, provided a demonstration of spiritual drumming, and allowed the students to practice drumming.

Course Assignments

The instructor of this course anticipated that the level of personal discovery and sharing by the students would exceed most other university courses. Thus, the students’ right to setting boundaries was honored. They were not assessed on the depth of their disclosures, but they were required to participate in class discussions at some level. As stated by Ingersoll (1997), a spirituality instructor must respect that students will only discuss as much as they are comfortable discussing.

Through assignments that elicited self-exploration, students examined their spiritual journeys. The expectation was that these assignments would help the students become more open to and experienced in discussing spirituality. Following is an explanation of the assignments required of all students enrolled in this course. First, the students developed and presented pictures that represented their spiritual histories. They were given the freedom to design the most effective means of displaying their particular spiritual journeys. For instance, students developed chronological time lines, computer graphics, and scrapbooks, which displayed the spiritual paths they had taken. Additionally, students were given the opportunity to present their projects to the class. This appeared to be a powerful and dynamic exercise for the students. Each student’s spiritual journey was unique and reflective of a diversity of spiritual perspectives. However, the students also became aware of common themes demonstrated in each spiritual journey. The value of this exercise became apparent at the end of the course when four undergraduate students and one graduate student made comments reflecting the fact that they experienced a greater understanding of the trials and tribulations of being human through this exercise.

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Next, the students wrote final integration papers to summarize all of the learning that took place in this course. They were advised to bring together all the topics into a cohesive term paper. Additionally, students were to pay particular attention to the link between spirituality in counseling and human services, their views of spirituality, and the diversity in expression of spirituality.

Finally, the graduate students were each required to design a treatment for a hypothetical client by integrating spirituality into a counseling theory of his or her choice. They were advised to be creative in presenting the assignment. Examples of this assignment included videotaped role-play counseling sessions, transcribed counseling sessions, and research papers.

Guest Lecturers

The instructor held extensive interviews with potential guest lecturers to assure appropriate and meaningful content would be covered. The selected guest lecturers represented a wide range of spiritual orientations and openly shared their knowledge with this class. Lecturers included Buddhist monks, a Christian counselor, a hypnotherapist, a Native American drummer, a nurse practitioner who uses yoga in her practice, and a naturopathic doctor who uses meditation in her practice. These lecturers brought the class to life as the presenters provided vivid examples of their practices.

Student Feedback

Student evaluations given at the end of each course are designed to assess both the effectiveness of the instructor and the content and design of the course curriculum. The course evaluation form asks broad questions about the strengths of the course and the instructor and asks for suggestions for improvement. Feedback indicated that students felt positively about the course. The most commonly noted strength of the course was its value in the human service field. One student wrote, “I am so appreciative of the opportunity to learn about spirituality in the context of human services. I believe I have become more open to various spiritual practices through this class.” Another commonly indicated strength was related to the utility of the guest presenters. “The guest presenters taught me about spiritual customs I had never been exposed to previously. They answered questions I would have been afraid to ask in the past.”

The most frequent suggestion for changing the course was to extend it to a full-length semester from its current intensive format. “I feel that this course deserves to be offered during a regular semester. Although the intensive format allowed us to bond quickly, I would have preferred it to have been held during the fall or spring term.” Another suggestion related to the grading of the course. Several students felt that the class should be graded pass/fail due to the highly subjective content of the assignments.

Discussion and Concluding Remarks

For years, the field of spirituality was left to religious leaders and was not considered in mainstream human service professions. A holistic approach to working with humans, however, requires the inclusion of this topic in educational programs. Human service professionals need to understand the interconnectedness of spirituality and the human services.

Although there is growing awareness of the benefits of spirituality, many educators avoid the topic in their pedagogy (Green et al., 2001; Rose, Westefeld, & Ansley, 2001; Schulte et al., 2002). This article is not recommending that human service programs become focused on spiritual or religious studies. However, the author is encouraging human service professionals to consider spiritual values and beliefs as meaningful client characteristics. HSIs have been leaders in other diversity issues, and they could also become leaders in educating their students about the significance of spirituality. It is hoped that this description of a spirituality course leads to consideration of additional course offerings related to spirituality and human services.

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traumatization (Pearlman & Saakvitne, 1995), critical incident stress (Evelry, Flannery, & Mitchell, 2000), and burnout (Maslach, 1982). At first glance, these constructs appear very similar due to their shared symptomatology. Being cognizant of subtle differences, however, is critical for accurate psychological injury assessment and diagnosis.

To assist students, educators, and practitioners in the differentiation process, this paper reviews existing psychological injury constructs. Moreover, current construct definitions are given, important clinical features corresponding with each construct are provided, and constructs are contrasted to illuminate similarities and differences. To further explore and contrast constructs, additional sources of information are provided. An effort was made to provide sources of information that appeared credible and comprehensive. It should be emphasized that the intent of this paper is not to advocate a particular construct but, rather, to provide a subjective review and contrast of existing constructs.

**Current State of Affairs**

Several important points need to be underscored when discussing psychological injury. First, only two of the seven aforementioned constructs appear in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-IV-TR)*, (American Psychiatric Association, 2000). These two constructs include acute stress disorder and posttraumatic stress disorder. This does not imply that these particular constructs are of greater importance or universally accepted (e.g., Harvey & Bryant, 2002) but, rather, that they have been formally recognized. A consequence of such high profile, however, is that providers may limit their scope to established constructs and, thereby, inadvertently overlook other (and perhaps more appropriate) constructs during the assessment and diagnostic process.

Second, it can be argued that a discussion of psychological injury should be expanded to include other constructs, such as adjustment disorder. Because additional constructs are not prominent within the psychological injury literature, they have not been included in this review.

Third, the opposite assertion could be made that additional constructs are unnecessary and that acute stress disorder and posttraumatic stress disorder sufficiently describe client and helping professional psychological injury. In short, it could be argued that additional constructs only complicate matters.

Fourth, a distinction can be drawn between constructs associated with client psychological injury and with helping professional psychological injury. Although the psychological well-being of helping professionals has received considerable attention over the years (e.g., Brodsky, 1986; Deutch, 1985; Guy, Poehstra, & Stark, 1989; Kilburg, Kaslow, & VandenBos, 1986; Lesse, 1981; Rippere & William, 1985), the issue of how helping professionals are negatively affected by their work appears to have burgeoned during the past decade. For example, several authors (Ana & Aiholz, 1999; Arvay, 2001; Black & Weinreich, 2000; Cornille & Woodward-Meyers, 1999; Emerson & Markos, 1996; Etherington, 2000; Figley, 1995; Grosh & Olsen, 1994; Joinson, 1992; Jones, 2001; Morrissette & Naden, 1998; Pearlman & Saakvitne, 1995; Pifflerling & Gilley, 2000; Sexton, 1999; Steed & Bicknell, 2001; Strawderman, Rosen, & Coleman, 1997) describe how helping professionals can be negatively influenced when experiencing, witnessing, or learning about traumatic events.

Realizing that some constructs are associated with helping professional psychological injury can be useful when differentiating among existing constructs. For example, constructs associated with client psychological injury include stress, acute stress disorder, and posttraumatic stress disorder. Conversely, constructs that are generally associated with helping professional psychological injury include secondary traumatic stress disorder/compassion fatigue, vicarious traumatization, critical incident stress, and burnout. Despite this categorization, however, flexibility is required. For example, clients as well as helping professionals can experience burnout.

Finally, the erroneous interchanging of constructs throughout the literature appears to have contributed to uncertainty regarding construct differentiation. For instance, the constructs of stress and burnout are commonly interchanged, thus suggesting that these constructs are one and the same. Pines (1993), however, distinguished between these two constructs and wrote,

"Unlike stress, which can occur in almost every type of work, burnout occurs most often among those who work with people and results from the emotional stress that arises during the interaction with them. Nevertheless, stress as such does not cause burnout. People are able to flourish in stressful and demanding jobs if they feel that their work is significant and appreciated. (p. 387)"

**Construct Progress and Development**

A review of various sources (e.g., construct-specific journals, books in print, assessment/diagnostic tools, organizational Web sites) demonstrates that some constructs have benefited from ongoing research and development whereas others have not. A prime example is the proliferation of information regarding posttraumatic stress disorder. This particular construct boasts a number of journals, books, and organizational Web sites devoted to information dissemination. Burnout, on the other hand, has not progressed beyond Maslach’s (1982) pioneering work and appears passé. Having said this, however, one must avoid hastily concluding that a construct has lost its value or has not undergone further development simply because pertinent information does not appear in traditional or electronic print. Perhaps the development of a construct has occurred in a less conspicuous manner and remains highly valued. Based on the current literature, one can only postulate why interest in some constructs has swelled, receded, or ceased. For example, it could be hypothesized that greater significance is placed on constructs...
to differentiate among the constructs. After scrutinizing the literature, it becomes evident that a different label, or an abbreviated version of a label, is often used to mean the same thing (e.g., trauma and posttraumatic stress disorder) and that symptomatology is very similar. In reference to the lack of differentiation among the constructs, Sexton (1999) wrote,

While there is considerable overlap among these theoretical constructs, there are also differences which have yet to be integrated. This may be because the field of psychotraumatology is still young and as yet there has been only limited research to examine these constructs. (p. 394)

A Review of Psychological Injury Constructs

The following section reviews constructs that are associated with client psychological injury and helping professional psychological injury respectively. It should be reiterated that the following categories are not rigid and that clients and helping professionals can present with similar presenting problems (e.g., stress). The purpose in creating categories is twofold. First, the categories demonstrate that constructs address each respective population. Second, categories help consolidate, synthesize, and organize information.

Client Psychological Injury

Three constructs associated with client psychological injury include stress, acute stress disorder, and posttraumatic stress disorder. Each construct is defined below, and sources for associated symptomatology are provided for the purposes of review and contrast.

Stress. Stress has received enormous attention and has been defined in a number of ways throughout the literature (Breznitz & Goldberger, 1993). In providing a working definition, Stoyva and Carlson (1993) suggested that psychological stress “...refers to a situation in which the challenges or threats facing the individual exceed his or her estimated coping mechanisms” (p. 729). Pines (1993) contended that stress did not cause burnout and that people are able to excel in stressful situations if they feel that their work is meaningful. Specific symptoms indicating stress have been outlined by Goldberger and Breznitz (1993) and additional information regarding symptomatology can be found at http://www.stressless.com and http://www.stresstips.com

Acute Stress Disorder. According to the DSM-IV-TR, acute stress “...is the development of characteristic anxiety, dissociative, and other symptoms that occurs within 1 month after exposure to an extreme traumatic stressor” (p. 469). Symptomatology specific to acute stress disorder appears in the DSM-IV-TR.

Posttraumatic Stress Disorder. As described in the DSM-IV-TR, posttraumatic stress disorder is the development of characteristic symptoms following exposure to an extreme traumatic stressor involving direct personal experience of an event that involves actual or

The Need for Clarification

Students, instructors, and practitioners often experience information overload regarding the topic of psychological injury. They also express frustration in deciphering the fine splintering that is evident among existing constructs. The ever-increasing number of books, journals, and Web pages devoted to psychological injury is impressive. Within this mounting information, examples of fine splintering between constructs, such as stress/acute stress disorder and secondary stress disorder/vicarious traumatization, is apparent. Upon careful reflection, it is further discovered that theoreticians/clinicians have created their own labels for stress, such as traumatic stress (Volpe, 1996) and acute traumatic stress (Lerner & Shelton, 2001). It is unclear why theoreticians/clinicians have decided to use different labels to describe a construct with an established label. This practice seems to promote further splintering and confusion.

Due to the erroneous interchanging, relabeling, and splintering confusion, students and professionals report frustration and uncertainty when attempting
threatened death or serious injury, or other threat to one’s physical integrity; or witnessing an event that involves death, injury, or a threat to the physical integrity of another person; or learning about an unexpected or violent death, serious harm, or threat of death or injury experienced by a family member or other close associate. (p. 463)

Additional information regarding posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) symptomatology appears in the DSM-IV-TR.

Client Psychological Injury Construct Contrast

To avoid confusion and enhance clarity, constructs that are associated with client psychological injury will be contrasted separately from those associated with helping professional psychological injury. From the outset, it should be noted that, with the exception of constructs appearing in the DSM-IV-TR, symptomatology varies, depending on the information source.

Construct Contrast

Three factors help to differentiate among the constructs of stress, acute stress disorder, and PTSD. First, there is an identified timeline associated with acute stress disorder and PTSD. To be diagnosed with acute stress disorder, an individual must demonstrate symptoms within one month of a traumatic event. A PTSD diagnosis requires that an individual must demonstrate symptoms for more than one month. On the other hand, the stress construct is vague, lacks a stipulated timeline, and merely requires that events or threats exceed an individual's estimated coping mechanism.

Second, a diagnosis of acute stress disorder or PTSD requires exposure to an extreme traumatic stressor. This requirement does not apply to the stress construct. Third, although the symptoms associated with each of the three constructs are very similar, more symptoms tend to be associated with stress, particularly in the area of physical symptoms. The degree of symptom intensity within the stress construct, however, is less intense when compared to acute stress disorder and posttraumatic stress disorder.

Finally, the primary differences between acute stress disorder and posttraumatic stress disorder include the aforementioned timeline and symptomatology. When compared to acute stress disorder, PTSD symptomatology is more severe and underlines the increased level of intensity (e.g., intense fear, horror).

It appears that acute stress disorder and stress can culminate in PTSD. In essence, PTSD is the most serious disorder of the three. Terr (1991) distinguished between single-event-based (type I) and ongoing trauma (type II). According to Terr, the psychological response to a single event (type I trauma) can result in PTSD whereas ongoing events (type II trauma) could develop into enduring mental health problems. It should be noted that PTSD can also develop into enduring mental health problems.

Helping Professional Psychological Injury

The constructs that are associated with helping professional psychological injury include secondary traumatic stress disorder, compassion fatigue, critical incident stress, vicarious traumatization, and burnout. A review of each construct is provided below.

Secondary Traumatic Stress Disorder (Compassion Fatigue). Figley (1995) defined secondary traumatic stress disorder (STSD) as “...the natural consequent behaviors and emotion resulting from knowing about a traumatizing event experienced by a significant other—the stress resulting from helping or wanting to help a traumatized or suffering person” (p. 7). According to Figley, STSD is a syndrome of symptoms nearly identical to PTSD, except that exposure to knowledge about a traumatizing event experienced by a significant other is associated with the set of STSD symptoms, and PTSD symptoms are directly connected to the sufferer, the person experiencing primary traumatic stress. (p. 8)

Specific symptomatology pertaining to STSD information appears in Figley’s 1995 book, Compassion fatigue: Coping with secondary traumatic stress disorder in those who treat the traumatized.

Critical Incident Stress. Flannery (1999) stated that, “...a critical incident may be thought of as an event which serves as a perceived threat or challenge to one’s well-being. A crisis results when that critical incident then serves to overwhelm one’s usual coping mechanisms yielding manifest evidence of impaired functioning and/or evidence of a psychiatric syndrome or disorder” (p. 138). In essence, critical incident stress (CIS) stems from events outside the usual realm of human experience that are markedly distressing. Such events can evoke adverse psychological reactions, physiological reactions, or both. As a result of the psychological trauma associated with significant critical events, normal coping mechanisms breakdown. This response can dramatically affect how professionals function at work, with their families, and socially. CIS stems from a single event or a series of very traumatic events that overwhelm the helping professional’s resources. Some of the significant events reported by helping professionals include: death of children, injury to children, death of any person, threatening events, knowing the victim, and grotesque sights and sounds exhibited by victims. Detailed symptomatology information regarding CIS is available at http://www.icisf.com

Vicarious Traumatization. Pearlman and Saakvitne (1995) defined vicarious traumatization as “...the transformation in the inner experience of the therapist that comes about as a result of the empathic engagement with clients’ trauma material” (p. 31). These authors asserted that the effects of vicarious traumatization were widespread and its costs were immeasurable. In their opinion, the experience of vicarious traumatization inevitably affects professional and personal relationships. According to Pearlman and Saakvitne,
this material can include graphic descriptions of violent events, exposure to the realities of people’s cruelty to one another, and involvement in witnessing traumatic events. Saakvitne and Pearlman (1996) provided additional symptomatology information.  

Burnout. Burnout has been reviewed extensively in the literature (e.g., Farber, 1983; Freudengenger, 1974; Grosch & Olsen, 1994; Maslach, 1982; Pines, 1993). Pines and Aronson (1988) defined burnout as “...a state of physical, emotional, and mental exhaustion caused by long-term involvement in emotionally demanding situations” (p. 9). Other authors (Grosch & Olsen, 1994) perceived burnout as a degenerative process, an erosion of spirit, and a loss of faith in the very enterprise of helping.  

Professional helpers who are experiencing burnout report an extreme dissatisfaction with their clinical experience. This construct is characterized by excessive distancing from patients; impaired competence; low energy; increased irritability with supporters; and other signs of impairment and depression resulting from individual, social, and work environment and social factors (Figley, 1995). According to Figley, burnout is a process, rather than a fixed condition, that begins gradually and becomes progressively worse. The process includes (a) a gradual exposure to job strain, (b) erosion of idealism, and (c) a void of achievement. Grosch and Olsen (1994) suggested that helping professionals often do not recognize the problem of burnout until it has reached an advanced stage. Pines (1993) provided additional information regarding symptomatology.

**Helping Professional Psychological Injury Construct Contrast**

The four constructs associated with helping professional psychological injury share many similarities. In actuality, it is difficult to differentiate among the four, and there has only been a minimal effort to decipher the differences. What is known is that these four constructs focus on how helping professionals are impacted by their work.  

Pearlman and Saakvitne (1995) contrasted vicarious traumatization with burnout and STSD. While conceding that there was some overlap with burnout, these authors asserted that vicarious traumatization was more than emotional exhaustion originating from interpersonal stress, unrealized aspirations, or both and poor working conditions. Although acknowledging that the burnout literature was relevant to working with trauma victims, McCam and Pearlman (1990) believed that, “...the potential effects of working with trauma survivors are distinct from those of working with other difficult populations because the therapist is exposed to the emotionally shocking images of horror and suffering that are characteristic of serious trauma” (p. 134).  

In contrast to STSD, Pearlman and Saakvitne (1995) maintained that vicarious traumatization had its foundation in a constructivist personality theory and, unlike STSD, vicarious traumatization emphasized the role of meaning and adaptation, rather than symptoms. Despite some differences between vicarious traumatization and other constructs, however, Pearlman and Saakvitne concluded, “Yet all of these concepts are related to vicarious traumatization in various ways” (p. 281). Although hinting at underlining similarities, these authors fell short of describing the similarities and, more importantly, specifying how vicarious traumatization is different from STSD and critical-incident stress.  

Figley (1995) underlined the seriousness of STSD and stated that the syndrome of symptoms that are associated with STSD are nearly identical to posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Although the symptoms associated with STSD and PTSD are very similar, Figley remarked “...exposure to knowledge about a traumatizing event experienced by a significant other is associated with the set of STSD symptoms, and PTSD symptoms are directly connected to the sufferer, the person experiencing primary traumatic stress” (p. 8). Drawing a distinction between PTSD and STSD is indeed challenging. As described within the DSM-IV-TR, PTSD includes “…witnessing an event that involves death, injury, or threat to the physical integrity of another person; or learning about unexpected serious or violent death, serious harm, or threat of death or injury experienced by a family member or close associate” (p. 463). A subtle difference that exists between the two disorders is that PTSD appears restricted to learning about potential harm to family members or close associates. STSD, on the other hand, expands beyond family members and close associates and includes clients.  

During a panel discussion, Figley and Mitchell (Figley, 1994) identified distinctions between STSD and critical incident stress (CIS). Mitchell suggested that CIS was an industrial strength version of compassion fatigue. He also considered CIS to be one form of compassion fatigue. Figley noted that an additional difference between these two constructs is that people who present with CIS see or experience serious events for themselves, whereas, with compassion fatigue, people absorb the trauma through the eyes and ears of others.  

Burnout is easily distinguished from the other three constructs. Burnout is considered a gradual process and is not associated with a specific traumatic event. For example, according to Pines (1993), “Stress happens to more people and in more situations than burnout” (p. 386). Of the four constructs in this category, it could be assumed that burnout is a less serious condition.

**Conclusion**

This article reviewed and contrasted prominent psychological injury constructs. More specifically, a distinction was made between client psychological injury and helping professional psychological injury. It appears that the practice of erroneously interchanging constructs, relabeling, and fine splintering has contributed to frustration and uncertainty for students.
educators, and practitioners. Aside from the work of Pearlman and Saakvitne (1995) and Figley (1995, 1994), there has been minimal effort to distinguish differences among constructs. It is also important to note that, despite a substantial literature base, constructs associated with helping professional psychological injury do not appear in the DSM-IV-TR.

Students, instructors, and professionals may benefit from knowing that the seven existing constructs tend to refer to either client or helping professional paper differentiated among the constructs to enhance assessment and diagnosis.

References


Preparation Students in Human Service Professions for Interdisciplinary Practice

Linda K. Knauss, Lisa G. Kramer, Margaret Inman Linn, Paula T. Silver, Hussein H. Soliman, and Robert H. Wellman

Abstract

It is becoming increasingly difficult for a single profession to respond adequately to clients who have multiple needs. Managed care and other changes in the provision of human services demand close interaction among professionals to facilitate services to clients and to avoid duplication of effort. While professional schools shape the thinking and practice of students to meet client needs, few models exist for training them to work collaboratively with members of other professions. This paper presents an evaluation of a training model that introduces graduate students from the professions of clinical psychology, education, physical therapy, and social work to interdisciplinary practice. Results indicate that, when compared with a control group, students who participated in the training model exhibited significant differences in learning on both knowledge and practice dimensions of interdisciplinary practice.

An interdisciplinary team approach to practice in the human service professions has been gaining momentum in a variety of settings, including hospitals, rehabilitation facilities, mental health centers, nursing homes, hospices, substance abuse treatment programs, and schools. This movement toward interdisciplinary care is driven by intellectual and fiscal considerations. Intellectually, the ever-growing sophistication of health care has resulted in clients being viewed as multidimensional beings. Increasingly, human service professionals are challenged by clients with complex problems and require knowledge from other disciplines in order to conceptualize, develop, and implement comprehensive treatment plans. Further, human service
professionals realize that no single profession can claim the skills and knowledge needed to provide optimal care. A rudimentary knowledge of related disciplines and the ability to work collaboratively must be developed to ensure that clients receive the best possible care.

In addition to intellectual concerns, fiscal demands—resulting from the reduced reimbursement structure under managed care—require professionals to provide quality care with fewer resources and for shorter time periods. For example, shorter periods of hospitalization and fewer health care visits mandated by managed care create a reduced window in which to serve clients. Services must now be delivered as effectively and efficiently as possible.

The intellectual and financial concerns associated with recent trends in managed care reimbursement can be met through a model of interdisciplinary components. Program design may require interdisciplinary experiences that are limited to a workshop or shortened course format, thus presenting the possibility of scope or method, all interdisciplinary training is intended to shape students’ professional identity while increasing their knowledge of other disciplines and to acquire essential competencies necessary for effective collaboration in the care of clients.

Variables identified in the literature as being important to fostering effective interdisciplinary practice include an understanding of the team-group process, team identity, communicating across disciplines, and group process, team identity, and ethics. Students need a clear conceptualization of the skills involved in interdisciplinary practice before embarking on team-building exercises. Without this knowledge, it is difficult to determine what is needed to develop a team, provide team leadership, or assess progress.

To understand team dynamics, students must be aware of both the team-member functions and the potential barriers to effective team building. In addition, they must be knowledgeable about the decision-making process and strategies designed to manage maladaptive behavior within a team. Vinokur-Kaplan also stressed the importance of task clarity. This is a measure of the team’s understanding of its purpose. Team identity is the extent to which members can identify with the group and develop a sense of membership and attachment. The educational process can help students develop an identity as a professional and a team player.

Communication across disciplines refers to team members’ ability to share information with other professionals. Effective collaboration involves exchanging ideas and opinions to facilitate cohesive and unified services to clients. Finally, interdisciplinary teams must integrate the values of different professions to encourage dialogue and discussion. This leads to a new group-based (team) set of values.

Purpose of the Study

The literature suggests that the most effective model for preparing students for interdisciplinary practice includes both didactic presentation and experiential exercises. The purpose of this study is to present a training model that incorporates both didactic and experiential training components and to evaluate this model’s effectiveness in fostering an understanding of interdisciplinary practice.

Methodology

Participants

Participants were students enrolled in professional graduate programs at a private university in the Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, region. Participants (N = 240) were enrolled in specific courses offered by four of the university’s professional disciplines: clinical psychology, education, physical therapy, and social work. Students enrolled in these courses with the understanding that interdisciplinary model through an intensive immersion approach. Regardless of scope or method, all interdisciplinary training is intended to shape students’ professional identity while increasing their knowledge of other disciplines and to acquire essential competencies necessary for effective collaboration in the care of clients.
that their section might be selected to participate in Student Clinical Day activities. Specific sections of each unit's courses were designated intervention \((n = 118)\) or control \((n = 122)\) group sections. Discipline representation was as education (intervention, \(n = 38\); control \(n = 26\) ), clinical psychology (intervention, \(n = 22\); control, \(n = 32\) ), social work (intervention, \(n = 30\); control, \(n = 34\) ), and physical therapy (intervention, \(n = 28\); control, \(n = 30\) ). The mean age of the sample was 30.15 years.

**Design**

A quasi-experimental design was used to determine the differences between the two groups for variables related to knowledge and appreciation of interdisciplinary approaches, as well as to develop skills for participating in interdisciplinary teams. Students assigned to the control group were enrolled in the same fields of study—clinical psychology, education, physical therapy, and social work—but did not participate in the didactic or experiential interdisciplinary experience.

**Study Instruments**

Two instruments, based on a review of the existing literature, were developed by one of the researchers (Soliman, 2000a, 2000b). The instruments were administered to both the intervention group and the control group following the intervention group's participation in interdisciplinary training.

The Interdisciplinary Teaching Survey (ITS) (Soliman, 2000b) consists of 21 items divided into four major domains examining the student's knowledge and understanding of interdisciplinary teams. The four major domains contained in the survey are:

1. **Concepts of Interdisciplinary Team:** the extent to which a student understands the basic ideas of an interdisciplinary team (multiple perspectives, differences of professional focus, collaboration, sharing, and leadership in interdisciplinary teams).
2. **Purpose of Interdisciplinary Team:** the extent to which a student appreciates the benefits and the goals of an interdisciplinary team.
3. **Interdisciplinary Team Group Process:** the steps involved in forming and preparing interdisciplinary teams, including establishing members' roles, team functions, addressing barriers to effective team building, strategies to deal with maladaptive behavior within the team, the decision-making process, and team performance evaluation.
4. **Values and Ethics:** the extent to which a student understands the values and ethics that influence an interdisciplinary team and determine its outcomes.

The Interdisciplinary Practice Experience Survey (IPES) (Soliman, 2000a) consists of 21 items representing four domains examining the team member's group participation skills. The four represented domains are:

1. **Team Identity:** the extent to which a team member is able to identify with the group and develop a sense of membership and attachment to the group.
2. **Communication Across Disciplines:** the extent to which a team member is able to interact with the group and create a meaningful exchange of ideas and thoughts.
3. **Participation in Team Process:** the extent to which a student is able to work with the team in addressing specific activities and tasks relevant to the team's goals.
4. **Contribution to Team:** the extent to which a member is capable of influencing the team's outcomes through his or her knowledge and skills of all the process through effective individual work.

Both instruments showed excellent levels of internal consistency in all of the domains included in the study. Alpha coefficients for the instruments ranged from .84-.96 and are summarized in Table 1. The items included in the survey were based on findings from researchers working in the area of interdisciplinary education (Betz & Turman, 1997; Burns, 1994; Clark, 1994, 1997; Cooley, 1994; Spiker et al., Vinokur-Kaplan, 1995).

**Intervention**

Three intervention sessions were conducted over five weeks. The first two sessions were didactic. The third session was experiential and included a multidisciplinary team simulation that was referred to as "Student Clinical Day." The first session was a presentation to students of each of the participating disciplines (clinical psychology, education, physical therapy, and social work).
by a team of four faculty representing each participating discipline. Goals for this initial session included introducing students to the interdisciplinary interdisciplinary teams. Following an introduction to the concept of team members and the unique contributions of each discipline to team effective teamwork, faculty presented the roles of interdisciplinary functioning. Next, components of effective team functioning, barriers to presented. Finally, students discussed their previous experiences with interdisciplinary teams in small groups that were led by faculty with his or her discipline-specific group. Goals for the session included a discussion of teamwork ethics, a presentation of the structure of a typical team Student Clinical Day. During the second session, students identified the values of their specific discipline and contrasted this with hypothesized values from the other disciplines. They discussed the need for confidentiality in team functioning and a client's right to identity protection. Students were introduced to the typical membership and organization of interdisciplinary teams, and they were given a general framework for introduction and discussion of case material. Finally, students were divided into small groups and given the discipline-specific case data addressed on Student Clinical Day. They were given the following tasks: (a) discuss the client's current and past level of functioning, (b) develop a plan of action for conveying this information to other members of the interdisciplinary team, (c) identify discipline-specific terms and define them in language that other professions would understand, (d) generate a list of questions for team members from other disciplines, and (e) generate a list of possible discipline-specific interventions. The third session was Student Clinical Day. During this 4-hour session, students engaged in a series of large- and small-group activities. After a brief introduction, students were divided into interdisciplinary teams. Team membership consisted of at least one student from each of the disciplines and a faculty member who served as a team consultant. The faculty facilitator functioned as a general resource person and timekeeper rather than as a discipline expert. All teams were given the same case study and were asked to develop an intervention plan for the identified client. Each team member was given a general description of the case study and their discipline-specific information to be shared with the team. For the next 45 minutes, students examined the case study and identified areas where additional information was needed from each of the disciplines. Following this simulated team meeting, students broke into discipline-specific groups for a 45-minute faculty-led discussion of the following issues: (a) how to integrate the information gained from other disciplines with discipline-specific treatment/service considerations, (b) service/treatment recommendations to bring back to the final interdisciplinary meeting, (c) strategies for presenting recommendations to their respective teams, and (d) discipline-specific benefits and challenges experienced during the meeting. Next, each interdisciplinary team reconvened for 45 minutes with the task of developing an integrated treatment plan for the identified client. Finally, the entire student group gathered for a brief wrap-up focusing on the interdisciplinary process.

Results

The results showed no significant difference in age between the intervention and the control groups in the study ($t = .42, ns$). Similarly, no difference between the two groups was found in terms of years of experience ($t = .95, ns$). The only significant difference between the groups was found in the number of years in the program ($t = .02, p < .05$). This difference does not necessarily influence the level of knowledge and skill in interdisciplinary teamwork since there is no reason to expect that exposure to interdisciplinary teams is a function of length of time in training.

To determine the differences between the two groups with regard to the reported level of knowledge and skills following the interdisciplinary experience, t-test analyses were used. The results in Table 2 show that significant differences ($p < .01$) were found between the control group and the intervention group in all the study domains.

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<td>Posttest Comparison of Intervention and Control Groups: Differences in Group Means</td>
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<td>Domain</td>
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<td>Teaching (ITS):</td>
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*p < .01.
Results indicate that the participants who attended the interdisciplinary module (intervention group) have significantly higher means than the control group in reported understanding of the basic knowledge of interdisciplinary teamwork. Similarly, the results in Table 2 indicated that the students who participated in the Student Clinical Day (intervention group) have significant differences on all the aspects of the interdisciplinary practice experience.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the effectiveness of a model to prepare students for interdisciplinary team practice in human service professions. Evaluation of this teaching module reveals that students benefited from obtaining basic information on interdisciplinary practice and from having the opportunity to apply that knowledge in a controlled setting. The results of the study showed a significant difference between the control group and the intervention group on all of the subscales of the teaching module (Table 2). In addition, there were significant differences between the means of the control group and intervention group on all of the subscales of the practice experience. Students reported that they developed the ability to understand the meaning of team identity and the process through which a team can develop its own identity. According to Clark (1994, 1997), professional identity is needed for students to develop an awareness of their own profession. However, strict adherence to one's discipline and inflexible views about other disciplines may inhibit future collaboration with other professionals. Results of this study suggest that issues of professional identity, when presented within the context of interdisciplinary practice, may positively affect students' practice.

Students also reported that they learned effective means of communicating across disciplines and that they developed an understanding of views expressed by professionals with different service perspectives. Effective communication among professionals can facilitate effective treatment. Cross-discipline communication can improve treatment and is essential to understanding the roles played by each discipline. In addition, it may reduce interprofessional tension and conflict.

Results of this study indicate that when compared to a control group, students who participated in the experience reported that they understood the process of engaging in an interdisciplinary team experience and recognized the impact of the team experience on each member's knowledge, skills, and practice. Overall, the findings demonstrate that students who participated in the training model reported significant learning with regard to the variables that have been identified in the literature as important to interdisciplinary collaboration. The findings suggest that students in professional training programs might benefit from training that provides both didactic presentations and practice simulations.

In addition, focus group discussions conducted after Student Clinical Day with students who participated in the training supported the quantitative findings. Students reported that didactic presentations provided them with the basic knowledge and skills needed for interdisciplinary team participation. The opportunity to practice interdisciplinary teamwork skills in a safe environment enhanced their working knowledge and bolstered their self-confidence. In general, students were highly satisfied with the interaction, collaboration, and exchange of ideas among members of their team.

Conclusions

It is becoming increasingly difficult for a single profession to respond adequately to clients who have multiple needs. Managed care and other changes in human service professions are demanding close interaction among professionals in order to facilitate and avoid duplication of services to clients. Although professional schools shape the thinking and practice of their students, courses taught from an interdisciplinary perspective are relatively uncommon. Students who participated in this study reported a need for further preparation for interdisciplinary work. It is important for students to understand the purpose and goals of interdisciplinary work in order to provide effective services to clients. One way to prepare students in this area is to develop a program of interaction among students from different disciplines that includes both didactic presentations and experiential exercises.

References


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Instructor Note

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Each year I review several introductory human service courses for many years and have used several editions of An Introduction to Human Services: Policy and Practice. Each year I think that I will use a different text and diligently go about examining others; once in a while I adopt a different one and then, the next fall, there I am ordering Mandell and Schram’s new edition. When Human Service Education requested reviewers and I learned that this text was one of the books to be reviewed, I enthusiastically responded to this opportunity to evaluate its strengths and weaknesses.

This text is divided into three major sections with a total of 14 chapters. Each chapter includes definitions of major concepts in the margins and a summary of the major points at the end; students find this format helpful for their studying. Throughout the book, case studies and interviews with human services workers are included. A glossary and lengthy bibliography are included after the final chapter. Summaries of the chapters and my reactions to them follow.

The first section, “The Context of Human Service Work,” consists of 6 chapters. Chapter 1 provides a brief introduction for students so they can have an overview of the field. It includes a short case study of someone going for help, examples of classified advertisements for human service positions, a discussion of barriers—internal and external—to getting help, and an interview with a drug and alcohol program coordinator discussing how she got her job and what she does. The section on barriers to getting help is particularly well organized and useful to students for understanding clients (and their own) difficulties in obtaining needed services.
Chapter 2, "The Changing Nature of the Helping Process," describes the history of helping in western societies, the changing issues in the social welfare field, defining social problems that lead to the need for human service work, and a specific history of the human service field. Chapter 3, "Strategies of Intervention," contains an in-depth discussion of multicausality, the diverse strategies of intervention that human service workers use, and activities and tasks that are needed to implement these strategies. This chapter is well organized and presents graphs, tables, figures, and charts to help students understand the total picture.

Chapter 4 focuses on the attitudes and values, skills, and knowledge that human service workers need. Values and ethical dilemmas that human service workers face are discussed in Chapter 5. Both of these are strong, self-explanatory chapters that are easy to follow and particularly interesting for students and faculty to discuss.

Chapter 6, the final chapter in this section, delineates the social welfare system and its services. This chapter is lengthy and filled with details about the policies, funding sources, and programs in the social service field. Changes in welfare laws and other programs funded through the Social Security Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, Medicaid, and Medicare are discussed; information on poverty and homelessness and their impact on specific populations is also included. In my experience with using this text, students comment that the chapter is difficult to follow and does not seem logically organized. My two suggestions are to divide this chapter into two and focus on programs separately from affected populations; and, instead of just referring to the social welfare system as a "crazy quilt," discuss how the lack of a system often makes it nonfriendly to users and workers alike.

Section Two, "Implementing Human Services Interventions," includes chapters on diversity, interviewing, case management and counseling, facilitating groups, program planning, and changing systems. Each of these chapters, except diversity, provides students with a comprehensive introduction to the specific courses included in most human service curricula.

In Chapter 7, "Working With Diversity," the authors attempt to demonstrate just how diverse both the populations served and the issues that arise are; this makes for a particularly rambling chapter that goes off in various directions.Logically, the chapter on diversity belongs in the first section. Although diversity does influence implementation greatly, I think diversity is the context in which all work in the U.S. takes place.

Chapter 8 focuses on interviewing: the structure of an interview; the skills, attitudes and values, and awareness the worker needs; and the forms and importance of record keeping. Case management and counseling are the focus of Chapter 9. Topics include task-focused casework; the work case managers do to help clients release negative feelings; increased self-awareness; designing and implementing plans with clients; crisis intervention; managed health care's increased importance in the social welfare field; and Employee Assistance Programs.

Chapter 10 is titled "Facilitating Groups" and includes attitudes toward group participation and leadership, a brief historical explanation of the increased emphasis on group work, a description of the complex questions to be answered in organizing and facilitating groups, differing group purposes, and evaluation systems. Theories of leadership are also introduced.

Chapter 11 highlights formalized program planning—the concrete tools needed, the process by which gaps are identified and filled, the techniques the planner uses, and the need to evaluate the planned program. Specific examples related to gaps in service for the elderly and planning a camping trip for teens are effectively used as examples. Chapter 12 focuses on both the attitudinal and practical elements of organizing and changing systems. Students who choose the helping professions often view direct service as the most important means to change; this macro-level chapter introduces students to a more sociological view.

Maintaining legal rights and protecting emotional needs are the main points of the final section of the book. Chapter 13 focuses on understanding legal issues. Confidentiality, privileged communication, privacy, and due process are emphasized, along with strategies to help clients secure their rights and current legal issues. Chapter 14 delineates the symptoms of and the pressures that lead to burnout, the positive strategies workers use to avoid burnout, and the role of adequate supervision in this process.

In general, the authors have written a text that deals with almost all the important issues an introductory course needs. Increased discussion of the use of computer technology and software is warranted; this is particularly important for program planning and presentations. The case studies and interviews are always relevant in emphasizing practical points that interest students. In future issues, discussion questions, suggested readings, and relevant websites at the end of each chapter would be helpful to both students and faculty.

My major criticism is not about the content but rather about the presentation of the material, an issue for the editors and the publisher rather than the authors. Students in the 21st century are accustomed to layout and presentation. This text is difficult to follow and does not seem logically organized. My two suggestions are to divide this chapter into two and focus on programs separately from affected populations; and, instead of just referring to the social welfare system as a "crazy quilt," discuss how the lack of a system often makes it nonfriendly to users and workers alike.

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BOOK REVIEW

Becoming a Helper, 4th Edition
By Marianne Schneider Corey and Gerald Corey
Reviewed by Jill C. Jurgens

Marianne Schneider Corey and Gerald Corey have updated their best seller, Becoming a Helper, to include three new chapters, several new discussion topics, and InfoTrac College Edition Resources, an online library. The book, designed to be used as a supplemental text to other books that cover theories, skills, and techniques, is an exceptional resource for individuals considering careers in counseling, social work, human services, or other helping-related fields. The authors engage readers in a pensive, caring exchange about the personal struggles, difficulties, apprehensions, and motives involved in becoming a competent helper.

Three new chapters have been added that address the impact of family of origin on helping approaches, boundary issues, and unique problems faced by helpers who work with special populations (i.e., clients with HIV/AIDS, clients with disabilities, and clients who are elderly). Other chapters have been reorganized and expanded to include discussions on spirituality, religion, value conflicts, consultation, and helping clients with end-of-life concerns.

Following, is an overview of each of the 15 chapters:

Chapter 1, “Are the Helping Professions for You?,” invites readers to examine their motivations for wanting to become helpers. The chapter outlines characteristics of effective helpers, explores various educational paths, and examines some important factors to consider when selecting a career in the helping professions.

Chapter 2, “Getting the Most From Your Education and Training,” challenges readers to take an active role in their education, to get the most out of their fieldwork, and to actively participate in their supervision process.

Chapter 3, “Helper, Know Thyself,” one of the three new chapters, encourages readers to examine how family-of-origin issues and early experiences influence present-day relationships and professional work. The
authors emphasize the benefits of personal counseling as a means of increasing the helper’s insight into issues that may impede their work.

Chapter 4, “Understanding Life Transitions,” discusses major life themes throughout various stages of human development. Readers are invited to reflect on crucial turning points in their lives and to review important decisions made at various junctures.

Chapter 5, “Stages in the Helping Process,” examines the various stages of the helping process, as well as the skills and knowledge necessary for each of the various stages. The authors propose an integrative approach to helping in order to better serve a diverse clientele.

Chapter 6, “Common Concerns of Beginning Helpers,” addresses the issues of transference, countertransference, resistance, and management of the helper’s feelings towards difficult clients. Readers are encouraged to utilize their supervisory field placement activities to work through issues related to resistant clients.

Chapter 7, “Values and the Helping Profession,” offers an overview of values and provides inventories to assist readers in assessing their own values. Information on how values may influence the reader’s work as a helper is also shared.

Chapter 8, “Cultural Diversity in the Helping Professions,” a piggyback on the theme introduced in Chapter 7, examines the roles that cultural values play in helping relationships. Readers are encouraged to appreciate diversity and incorporate diversity awareness into every helping relationship.

Chapter 9, “Ethical and Legal Issues Facing Helpers,” introduces readers to a variety of ethical and legal dilemmas that helpers often encounter. In addition to providing an overview of law and ethics, the chapter provides a systematic model for ethical decision making.

Chapter 10, “Managing Boundary Issues,” a new chapter to this edition, provides readers with a variety of ethical concerns that could damage personal and professional boundaries. Readers are encouraged to question how their own motivations impact their clients’ behaviors.

Chapter 11, “Working in the Community,” focuses on the unique responsibilities of community workers. The community approach to helping is detailed, and readers choosing community settings are urged to develop a more comprehensive idea of who the client is.

Chapter 12, “Understanding Special Populations,” the third new chapter, discusses in detail the challenges faced by people with HIV/AIDS, people with disabilities, and the elderly. The chapter reemphasizes some of the points brought out in Chapter 11 regarding the importance of empowering individuals and the community in order to bring about change. Readers are encouraged to focus on their clients’ potential rather than on perceived limitations.

Chapter 13, “Working With Groups and Families,” examines the values of working with groups and families and provides guidelines for getting the most from a group experience.

Chapter 14, “Stress and Burnout,” explores the hazards of the helping profession, specifically the impact of stress and how prolonged stress can lead to burnout and impairment. The chapter examines sources of stress and causes of burnout.

Chapter 15, “Take Care of Yourself,” provides readers with specific techniques for managing stress through self-monitoring and through cognitive approaches. Prevention strategies are also addressed.

Corey and Corey did an exceptional job of logically arranging each chapter, making the book extremely user friendly. Chapters follow the same organized outline:

1. Focus Questions,
2. Aim of the Chapter,
3. Development of the Topic,
4. By Way of Review (a review of the chapter),
5. What Will You Do Now? (a list of suggested activities), and
6. InfoTrac College Edition Resources (a list of key word searches for use with the online library).

Readers will enjoy this easy to use text and find its many topics both practical and meaningful. Written by two of the leading experts in the field, this essential text delves into the demands of the helping profession and explores the effects of these demands on helpers. Becoming a Helper is “the classic” in the field of counseling, and this latest edition is a “must read” for individuals considering, or embarking on, careers in the helping professions.

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An Introduction to Human Services
By Marianne Woodside and Tricia McClam
Reviewed by Todd R. Gomez

An Introduction to Human Services (4th edition) is a text that affords the reader an introductory, yet comprehensive understanding regarding the nature and practice of human service delivery. The authors, Marianne Woodside and Tricia McClam, provide an elaborative and readable book that focuses quite uniquely on human services as a profession and addresses the rather large umbrella of the human service delivery system. This book provides students and future human service practitioners alike with a sound template to better understand both the historical underpinnings and current directions of the human service field and profession. From beginning to end, the textbook informs, illustrates, and challenges one to continue their learning—through the scope of information presented, use of educational case studies and vignettes, and listing of website resources. The book consists of three major parts: “Part One: Defining Human Services,” “Part Two: Clients and Helpers in Human Services,” and “Part Three: The Practice of Human Services.”

In “Part One: Defining Human Services,” much effort is undertaken to articulate how to define human services, insomuch as themes and purposes are explored, and to underscore the interdisciplinary perspectives related to human service delivery. The bidirectional nature of the client/helper relationship is delved into in order to highlight the need for human service professionals to examine the client in context, seek to understand the client’s worldview, and facilitate client growth through education and self-sufficiency empowerment. Management strategies, such as networking, formation of teams and partnerships, and case management, are also examined, given the evidenced need for human service professionals to be more knowledgeable about their role in the coordination and delivery of services.
Perhaps most engaging to the reader in the opening part of the book is the historical timeline elucidation of human services from Colonial America to the present day, with mention of anticipated challenges to be faced by human service practitioners in the 21st century. The practical detail on philosophies and movements, as well as key persons who contributed to the development and growth of what is known today as human services, is quite intriguing—particularly in the way the authors focus the text commentary on the various categorizations of people in need and the changing perceptions over time as to whether and to whom service ought to be provided overall.

Additionally, part one provides a thoughtful explanation of service-setting changes, technological advances, and the influence of managed care on the delivery and quality of care as it relates to human service provision. Further, to the authors’ and book’s credit, attention is paid to the international dimension of human service provision. That is, the authors posit that the myriad problems and plights of world peoples must be understood in order for one to adequately grasp the larger picture of need both abroad and at home in America. For example, immigration to America by persons from war-torn countries or those experiencing economic strife is expected to add to the melting pot in the United States; and, as such, the various trends evidenced now and future projections should be considered when providing services and developing novel approaches. Moreover, the comparing and contrasting of the medical, public health, and human services models marks an apt conclusion to part one by underscoring the need for human service professionals to focus on the whole person, incorporating and blending, when needed, the various models in an effort to promote client problem alleviation, resolution, or both.

In “Part Two: Clients and Helpers in Human Services,” the concept of the client as a whole person with multiple dimensions of self (i.e., psychological, social, economic, vocational, and spiritual) and the identification of potential problems is elaborated upon in greater depth. Additionally, the client as an individual, group, or population is simply, but concisely elaborated upon. The various avenues in which clients find themselves a part of the human service delivery system is also examined in part two. Self- and professional referral, involuntary placement, inadvertent exposure to services, and client barriers to seeking help are detailed. Emphasis on client expectations from the human service system itself, as well as the human service professional, is broached quite well, particularly so given a first person accounting of a client speaking of his entry into the system, barriers to help, and perceptions of human services workers encountered.

Perhaps most notable in Part Two of this book is the authors’ emphasis on conveying the human service helper as a professional, who should be apprised of his or her motivations for entering the helping professions, be aware of values as it relates to the helping process, and know the characteristics of effective helping. Further, human service professional helpers are contrasted with other professional helpers to identify those with whom the human service professional may most frequently come into contact and possibly team-up with or link for the brokerage of services on behalf of the client. Moreover, an in-depth recitation of what human service professionals do in terms of roles is provided. That is, three categories, providing direct support, performing administrative work, and working with the community, are examined, as well as the respective roles in which human service professionals may find themselves. The text’s argument that each human service professional’s roles and responsibilities are apt to be varied and unique lends itself well to the multiple tasks and functions with which students and new practitioners most assuredly will be faced.

“Part Three: The Practice of Human Services” is concerned with the practically applied aspects of the human services and helping relationship. The stages of helping are differentiated, as are basic helping skills (e.g., listening and responding to verbal and nonverbal behavior, open/closed questions). Ways to deal with culturally diverse or difficult clientele, such as resistant, silent, or both; overly demanding; and unmotivated, are discussed. Particularly helpful is a section devoted entirely to crisis intervention. Since many new human service professionals will almost certainly find themselves engaged early on in their careers with helping a client in a state of emergency or perceived crisis, the authors’ emphasis on this aspect of helping is extremely beneficial.

Further, in “Part Three,” an ecological systems approach is examined so as to highlight the usage of general systems theory. Inputs, rules of transformation, outputs, and boundaries are addressed, as are systemic concepts, such as interdependency and change. In short, the authors provide a primer on better understanding a client’s frame of reference within the context of a life systems diagram—something akin to a family systems genogram—but more related to a human service diagramming of a client(s) in relation to their familial, extrafamilial, and community environmental interactions. In other words, the text examines the primary, secondary, and tertiary layers of influences on the individual. Equally as important, the authors remind the reader that, much like the client, the human service professional must be aware of his or her major environmental influences. Once the student or new professional has an awareness of the contextual strengths and limitations, the authors put forth the expectation that, should referral be necessary, procedures must be followed to refer appropriately, with care, and with follow-up.

Moreover, the point is made that in order to avail the client with the opportunity for a successful referral, the human service professional must be certain to both maintain and continue to build an information network. For without an ongoing recordation and openness to cooperate between and amongst human service agencies, the referral process may be flawed (i.e., emphasis is placed upon fostering both formal and informal networks in support of clientele).
Finally, in nearing conclusion to part three, the authors thoroughly and quite forcefully underscore the ethical standards to which human service professionals ought to adhere by examining the ethical codes of the National Organization of Human Service Education (NOHSE) and by detailing an ethical decision-making model. In the conclusion to “Part Three,” the authors address stress and burnout, as well as the lifelong nature of the human service professional to practice growth and continuing educational learning.

All told, this 4th edition of the book resolidifies the authors’ contribution to the field and practice of human services as writers, researchers, and practitioners concerned about best practices among the next generation of new human service professionals. This is a book that extols the virtues of introductory knowledge and skill requisites, as well as a text that fills a gap in the human service profession — a textbook surely worthy of instructor/professorial review and possible course adoption for those teaching in human and community human service programs.

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Guidelines for Authors

_Human Service Education_ (HSE) is a refereed journal. Manuscripts which are judged by the editors to fall within the range of interest of the journal will be submitted without the names and identifying information of the authors to reviewers.

The principal audiences of HSE are faculty members and administrators in institutions of higher education and practitioners interested in human service education. Sample areas of interest include teaching methods, curricular design, internships and experiential learning, faculty development, career paths of graduates, issues of program quality, relationships with human service agencies, articulation between two- and four-year programs, and models of graduate study in human services.

HSE publishes three types of submissions: 1) articles, 2) brief notes, and 3) critical reviews of instructional materials and scholarly books of interest to human service educators.

The following instructions apply to all three types of submission:

1. Manuscripts should be well organized and present the idea in a clear and concise manner. Use headings and subheadings to guide the reader. Avoid the use of jargon and sexist terminology.
2. Manuscripts should be typed in 12 point type with margins of at least one inch on all four sides. All material should be double spaced including references, all lines of tables, and extensive quotations.
3. All material should conform to the style of the fifth edition of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association.
4. Avoid footnotes wherever possible.
5. Tables should be kept to a minimum. Include only essential data and combine tables whenever possible. Each table should be on a separate sheet of paper following the reference section of the article. Final placement of tables is at the discretion of the editors.
6. Figures (graphs, illustrations) must be supplied as camera ready art, must fit in a single page space, and must be in black and white, with a minimum of grey shading. Figure titles should be attached to the art. Use of submitted figures or a re-rendering of the figure for clarity is at the discretion of the editors.
7. On a separate page, place the title of the article, the names of the authors, their institutional affiliations, and headings should be as short as possible.
8. Check all references for completeness; make sure all references mentioned in the text are listed in the reference section and vice versa.
9. Manuscripts are edited for consistency of grammar, spelling, and punctuation. In some cases, portions of manuscripts may be re-worded for conciseness or clarity of expression.
10. Manuscripts are accepted for review with the understanding that they represent original work and are not under review by another publication.
11. All manuscripts must meet the specifications detailed above or they will be returned to the authors before review for publication.

The following are additional directions for each type of submission:

1. **Articles.** Ordinarily, manuscripts for articles should not exceed ten (10) typed pages. Following the title page include an abstract of not more than 100 words. This statement should express the central idea of the article in nontechnical language and should appear on a page separate from the text.
2. **Brief Notes.** Submissions appropriate for this format include brief reports of research projects or program innovations. Manuscripts should not exceed four double-spaced typed pages; it is recommended that the results and implications occupy at least half of the brief note. A 50 word capsule statement should accompany the note.
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Human Service Education  •  Volume 23, Number 1  •  Page 111
The National Organization for Human Service Education (NOHSE) was founded in 1975 as an outgrowth of a perceived need by professional care providers and legislators for improved methods of human service delivery. With the support of the National Institute of Mental Health and the Southern Regional Education Board, NOHSE focused its energies on developing and strengthening human service education programs at the associate, bachelor’s, master’s, and doctoral levels.

The current purposes of the organization are: (a) to provide a medium for cooperation and communication among human service organizations and individual practitioners, faculty, and students; (b) to foster excellence in teaching, research, and curriculum development for improving the education of human service delivery personnel; (c) to encourage, support, and assist the development of local, state, and national organizations of human services; (d) to sponsor conferences, institutes, and symposia that foster creative approaches to meeting human service needs.

Members of NOHSE are drawn from diverse educational and professional backgrounds that include corrections, mental health, child care, social services, human resource management, gerontology, developmental disabilities, addictions, recreation, and education. Membership is open to human service educators, students, fieldwork supervisors, direct care professionals, and administrators. Benefits of membership include a subscription to Human Service Education and to The Link (the quarterly newsletter) and the availability of professional development workshops, professional development and research grants, and an annual conference.

Six regional organizations are affiliated with NOHSE and provide additional benefits to their members; they include the New England Organization of Human Service Education, Mid-Atlantic Consortium for Human Services, Southern Organization for Human Service Education, Midwest-North Central Organization for Human Service Education, Northwest Organization of Human Services, and Western Region of the National Organization for Human Service Education.

NOHSE is closely allied with the Council for Standards in Human Service Education (CSHSE). CSHSE, founded in 1979, has developed a highly respected set of standards for professional human service education programs and also provides technical assistance to programs seeking Council accreditation.

Membership information can be found on the organization’s website at www.nohse.com. Other correspondence should be addressed to Association Managers, Inc. 9001 Braddock Rd., Suite 380, Springfield, VA 22151. Telephone: 703/426-8100, fax 703/426-8400