

Self-Assessment of Practicum Learning

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I spent my summer quarter interning at Catholic Community Services' Addiction Recovery Center. I worked within the women with children outpatient group. I chose this practicum site because I want to be a Chemical Dependence Professional. I wrote my learning objectives to further my understanding of the chemical dependence profession. My first learning objective was to learn how to complete daily progress notes. My second learning objective was to learn how to motivate resistant clients. My internship experiences allowed me to focus my attentions on both of my learning objectives.

My progress toward achieving my stated learning objectives has been a smooth process. Learning how to write around twenty daily client process notes was a quick learning process. One main thing I learned about progress notes was fine-tuning my assessment skills. I would ask myself: "did the client appear engaged", "what did the client say that seemed important to document", and "what ASAM criteria was today's lesson". My direct supervisor advised that progress notes is a skill that develops with time. I feel confident that I can write detail progress notes. It was challenging to hand write my progress notes as I am use to using the computer.

Half of my day at my internship is spent observing an intensive outpatient group. I learned a lot of how to do group counseling. It can be difficult to pull all individuals in large group of fifteen to twenty-two women. The counselor tended to reflect individual questions back to the group. Peers with experience would speak about their experience. I have gained more hands on experience with motivating resistant clients. My progress toward my second learning objective is not completed. I need always to learn more on motivating clients. My learning activities on how to write proper documented were helpful. I did not always use my learning activities on my second learning objective.

My practicum experience contained a significant amount of serendipitous learning. The majority of the clients are DCFS involved. DCFS has a Family Treatment Court program that diverts mothers into treatment. I learned a lot about the DCFS experience through the mother's point of view. Mothers have rights. I also learned more about community support programs like Law Advocates, Womencare Shelter, and Brigid Collins. I also learned the importance of self-care. I was emotionally exhausted by the end of my day. This decrease when I learned how to incorporate daily meditation. Fifteen minutes a day after my internship has significantly decrease my levels of stress. A significant learning experience was my increase awareness that I have a lot of areas that I need more education. I need more academic training on the topics of incest and childhood sexual abuse.

I was successful in achieving the HSP 341 learning outcomes. A primary learning outcome is the establishment of professional boundaries and behavior (CSHSE standard 17). I learned early to establish professional boundaries with the clients. A lot of the clients regularly see me in the community. A few of the clients knew me before my internship. I made a point of letting my supervisor aware that I knew some of the clients. I also made a point to speak to individual with clients about dual roles, and congeniality.

The experience of learning about professional boundaries leads to learning about ethical standards. The second learning outcome in the syllabus was to "apply knowledge of ethical standards to professional practice". Confidentiality was the primarily ethical standard that I used on a daily basis. The clients' files required a high level of confidentiality. The office door must be closed at all times. If wrong paperwork was filed in another client's file that was a confidentiality breach. Even dull paperwork filing responsibility requires high level of ethical standards.

Other learning outcomes within HSP 341 were 120 hours of supervised internship hours and reflection of professional skills. I completed more than the minimum amount of supervised internship hours. I am also volunteering between summer and fall quarters. HSP 341 required significant amount of dialog about learning about development of professional skills. I learned through class discussion about other students' learning.

I believe that my overall performance as a practicum student was above average. I am basing this on my feedback from my supervisors. I was praised for asking questions. Lex Rivers also commented on my ability to receive feedback. My direct supervisor commented that she liked my ability to be honest about my feelings on the first day of group. Clients seem to like my presence in the RFP group. I am highly motivated to learn about chemical dependency.

I am so an independent person who also knew when to ask for help. I spoke with my direct supervisor about my learning once or twice a week. Tory was always encouraging and supportive of my learning. I felt like I could ask her any questions. She also understood the possible emotional feelings or issues for my professional development. She was reassuring that it's okay to make mistakes. I did have several schedule conflicts with my supervisor. It was difficult at times because Lex needed to rescheduled meetings. Then again he is head of a very large nonprofit so it was understandable. My experience with Catholic Community Services was above my expectations. Staff was very friendly to a new face.

My plan for my next internship is to stay with the RFP group at CCS. I am planning to step up to a more active leadership role in the group. I am planning to present a project about Post Acute Withdrawal Syndrome. I also plan on sitting on my assessments for new clients. I may also get the chance to observe the court process of the Family Treatment program. I am truly excited about starting next quarter!