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Running Head: Management Practicum

Development of a Management Practicum in a
Clinical Psychology Program

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Development of a Management Practicum in a Clinical Psychology Program

Some clinical psychology programs are developing training in management in response to both the recognition that management is a major professional role for many psychologists (Clements, Rickard, & Kleinot, 1986) and the National Council of Schools of Professional Psychology's (NCSPP) inclusion of "supervision and management" as one of six competency areas for the core curriculum in professional psychology (Peterson, R. L., McHolland, J. D., Bent, R. J., Davis-Russell, E., Edwall, G. E., Polite, K., Singer, D. L., & Stricker, G., 1991). At the Graduate School of Clinical Psychology at George Fox University (Newberg, OR), we developed a management practicum to facilitate specific and advanced training of selected doctoral students in this competency area. In this article, we compare and contrast our program with the one developed at West Virginia University (WVU), described in a previous article in this journal.

The program developed at George Fox University (GFU) is focused around a management practicum in which students learn the knowledge and skills pertinent to management and administration of a clinical service delivery site, whereas the program at WVU focuses on training students in "administrative training generally and DCT training specifically." While much of the administrative training knowledge in the two programs is suspected to be similar in content, the skills developed in the management practicum are more closely associated with the management demands psychologists experience in a variety of clinical delivery sites, versus the DCT skills which may not be as widely applicable.

Overview of Management Practicum

Our pilot program was developed in the spring of 1998 and implemented the following fall, which provided specific training for one graduate student. The plan was to begin with a

pilot program from which evaluation and feedback information would help us refine and possibly broaden the program. The specific training objectives and methods are defined followed by student selection and evaluation criteria. Finally, reflections and recommendations for further program development are provided.

Training Objectives and Methods

Although different in focus, both programs recognize the need for training in knowledge and skills. GFU's program was organized around clinical and administrative management issues whereas WVU's program focused on knowledge and skills specifically related to the DCT's function and position. A major distinction between the two programs is GFU's clinical management training component. The training objectives and methods in this area are outlined in Table 1.

Insert Table 1 here

The administrative management objectives and methods utilized in GFU's management practicum training program are somewhat specific to the setting (an integrated university Health and Counseling Center), however, they were designed to develop knowledge, skills, and attitudes believed to be applicable to a broad variety of clinical settings. Table 2 outlines the administrative management objectives and methods.

Insert Table 2 here

Student Selection and Evaluation

Both programs at GFU and WVU recognize the need to select a student interested in administration. At GFU, several additional considerations were made in selecting a suitable student for this management practicum. First, a successful candidate had to possess clinical skills that were sufficiently developed so this practicum's emphasis on management skills would not cause clinical skill development to suffer. Second, a student was sought who demonstrated management interests and skills. These interests and skills were displayed through previous leadership roles and consistent follow-through on previously assigned tasks. A prior knowledge of how the clinic functioned was preferred. Third, the student needed to demonstrate skills in balancing various responsibilities simultaneously since regular clinical service delivery was included in the management practicum experience. The client load, however, was designed to be lighter than it is for typical clinical practicum students.

For our pilot year, it was decided to invite a student to the position rather than posting the position along with other practicum position openings. A student who had completed a previous practicum in the University Health and Counseling Center and who had expressed interest in working professionally as a university counseling center director was approached about the position and later selected. In the second year, the position was posted and students applied for consideration.

Both GFU's and WVU's programs used formal and informal evaluations in their programs. At GFU, an informal discussion was held mid-semester to determine how both the student and the clinic director/clinical supervisor felt the management practicum was progressing. Minor adjustments were made and training objective areas that had not been covered yet were targeted for the future. At the end of the first semester, a more formal written evaluation of the student and the program was made with a specific plan developed for those

objectives and methods to be pursued during the second semester. A final formal written evaluation was conducted at the end of the second semester which evaluated the student's performance, noting strengths and areas for further development. Also, suggestions and comments were solicited from the student regarding further program development and changes for the coming year.

Reflections on the Pilot Program

Overall, the GFU's pilot program successfully accomplished all of the objectives set forth above to varying degrees. Considering continuation and expansion of the program, the following issues are currently being contemplated. First, there was a tremendous advantage to having a student in the position who previously worked at this site. While a student new to the site could certainly benefit from a management practicum such as this, there would be a steep learning curve to contend with that is not an issue with someone already familiar with clinic policies and procedures. Another added benefit of selecting a known student is that the working relationship between the student and supervisor is more advanced, thus eliminating many of the potential pitfalls that might arise from incompatible management styles or personality conflicts.

Second, the training and remediation components of this practicum have been especially valuable. Since all our practicum students come from the same clinical psychology program, our management practicum student knows what the other students have received in their academic program. This insight has enabled the student manager to work more quickly and precisely with the students needing remediation.

Third, other students have expressed interest in being considered for the management practicum program, indicating interest both in this particular practicum experience and possibly

suggesting a realization on their part that management is increasingly common in the professional life of clinical psychologists.

Finally, not only does the student benefit from a management practicum, but the clinic benefits as well. Due to staffing limitations common to many counseling centers, several of the areas within the center received increased monitoring and management. This facilitates in a more efficient clinic operation and increases both the quality and quantity of clinical services offered to the clinic's clients.

This pilot training program worked well in its first year of operation. Plans call for expanding the training opportunity to more practicum students and pursuing some management practicums in local mental health service centers. It appears that appropriate supervised management practicums could be developed in community mental health centers, chemical dependency treatment facilities, hospitals, and forensic settings.

Summary

Although the program at GFU is still embryonic in its development, it provides a model of practicum training in management not found in the professional literature. As national surveys show, many psychologists are currently involved in management roles, and the demands for more management roles may increase with the increasing development of managed mental health care.

A practicum such as the one provided in this paper offers clinical psychology students greater awareness of management opportunities and needs. It also helps students identify management as a potential career path earlier in their professional development so that they can seek out further education and supervised training in this area.

We believe the distinctive of our management practicum program is the breadth of management training as illustrated in the clinical and administrative objectives. This breadth of

training assists students in developing key fundamental skills and knowledge that can be applied in a wide variety of clinical management settings.

References

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Table 1

Clinical Management Objectives and Methods

Training Objectives	Training Methods
Develop expertise in training and orienting new practicum student counselors	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Presented portions of initial orientation training at the beginning of the year 2. Full responsibility for orientation of two additional practicum students later in the year 3. Participated in bi-monthly clinical training meetings for practicum students
Develop clinical supervision skills	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Performed chart review giving corrective feedback to practicum students 2. Provided additional clinical supervision for two practicum students needing remediation
Develop skills in clinic client load management	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reviewed monthly clinic service delivery statistics and followed up on situations falling outside clinic service provision parameters
Develop confidence in responding to emergency situations and consultations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. On-call duty when the clinic director was out of town
Learn the professional organizations relevant to university counseling center programs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discussed professional organizations and journals outlining their merits and contributions

Table 2

Administrative Management Objectives and Methods

Training Objectives	Training Methods
Develop understanding of the clinic's place in the broader university context	1. Accompanied director to student affairs management meetings followed by discussion of observations
Learn how to work with and develop clinic constituencies in the broader university context	1. Discussed ways to facilitate stronger relationships with various clinic constituencies within the university 2. Discussed issues arising through the year involving the relationship of the clinic and other university offices
Develop other management skills relevant to this clinic	1. Made practicum student room assignments insuring accessibility and equity in room quality and video taping capability 2. Updated the No-Harm Policy and related forms for students living off campus
Develop knowledge and understanding of clinic funding and financial issues	1. Reviewed annual budget and budget proposal along with monthly budget reports 2. Discussed processes, politics and issues in establishing new funding within a university setting
Develop and review programs and policies	1. Developed and instituted an alcohol evaluation and treatment program for students in violation of university alcohol policy 2. Developed an Eating Disorder Process/Educational Group and worked with Eating Disorder Awareness Week programming. 3. Reviewed and updated the Crisis Responses and Procedures Training Manual
Develop an understanding of student insurance plans	1. Discussed student insurance RFP's, policy options and configurations, coverages, state and federal laws, and other plan issues