Fieldwork Supervisor Orientation FA2023 Transcript

Slide 1:

Welcome to the fieldwork supervisor orientation presentation for the Rehabilitation Counseling Program at San Diego State University. I’m Mark Tucker, Coordinator of the program, and I want to thank you for agreeing to provide site-supervision for one or more of our students. This presentation will provide some background on our program, identify key elements and procedures related to fieldwork supervision, and provide information about additional resources for fieldwork supervisors.

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Here is a brief outline of the topics that we’ll go over during this presentation. We’ll start with a little information about our program. After that we’ll move on to information about our professional accreditation through CACREP – the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs. CACREP standards for rehabilitation counseling programs play a prominent role in the way we structure our fieldwork experiences for students.

We’ll spend some time discussing requirements of fieldwork supervisors, followed by a brief summary of some of the benefits of supervising interns. I’ll summarize some of the important tasks you will be asked to carry out as a fieldwork supervisor, and finally we’ll close with information about additional resources and contact information.

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I’d like to share with you some information about the rehabilitation counseling program at San Diego State University.

Our program is currently ranked third in the nation among rehabilitation counseling programs by U.S. News and World Report.

The program is one of the most highly-ranked academic programs at SDSU.

The program has been ranked among the top ten programs nationally for quite some time.

We take a lot of pride in the national ranking and believe that our fieldwork sites and supervisors contribute substantially to the national ranking and to the impact that our students and graduates have.

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The rehabilitation counseling program has two tracks, leading to similar but slightly different degrees. I’ll discuss each briefly.

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There is one track that we refer to as the generalist track, which focuses upon preparing rehabilitation counselors to work with individuals with a wide range of disabilities. Students in this track often graduate and work in state vocational rehabilitation agencies, postsecondary education settings, the department of veterans’ affairs, agencies for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, and a variety of community-based organizations serving individuals with disabilities.

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We also have a track that we refer to as the psychiatric rehabilitation track, which focuses upon preparing rehabilitation counselors to work with individuals with mental health disabilities. Graduates of this track often work in mental health settings or settings where they can provide vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with mental health disabilities.

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Our program’s accrediting body, the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs, or CACREP, issues standards designed to promote excellence in professional preparation of counselors, including rehabilitation counselors. Many of the activities and procedures associated with student fieldwork and supervision of fieldwork that we will discuss later in this presentation are reinforced by CACREP through their standards for rehabilitation counseling programs.

If you’d like to learn more about CACREP you can start by visiting the URL at the bottom of this slide.

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Prior to our CACREP accreditation the rehabilitation counseling program was accredited by CORE, the Council on Rehabilitation Education. During our last accreditation cycle the two accrediting bodies merged, with the merger completed during 2017.

Under that accreditation the generalist track was accredited under the “Rehabilitation Counseling” specialty area and the psychiatric rehabilitation track was previously dually-accredited under two specialty areas: “Clinical Rehabilitation Counseling” and “Clinical Mental Health Counseling”.

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Our program anticipates changes to our accreditation status in the near future. Our current accreditation period is coming to an end, and during the 2022-2023 academic year the rehabilitation counseling program submitted an application for accreditation with one particularly important change.

The generalist rehabilitation counseling program track was previously accredited under the “Rehabilitation Counseling” specialty area and under our new application we do not expect any changes with respect to the specialty area.

The psychiatric rehabilitation track has been accredited under two specialty areas, “Clinical Rehabilitation Counseling” and “Clinical Mental Health Counseling”. Under our new application we have applied for accreditation under the “Clinical Rehabilitation Counseling” specialty area. So, if we are ultimately granted accreditation, the psychiatric rehabilitation track will no longer be accredited under the “Clinical Mental Health Counseling” specialty area.

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It is important to note that programs accredited by CACREP adhere to the American Counseling Association’s code of ethics. You can find the code of ethics by visiting the URL that appears on the screen.

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Here are some of the CACREP guidelines that we use to structure our fieldwork courses.

During beginning practicum, which students usually take during their first year in the program, students must complete 100 supervised hours. This figure is inclusive of hours spent in the classroom. A minimum of 40 hours must be direct service hours; hours that interns spent working with or on behalf of individuals served by the organization.

Students usually take the intermediate practicum and internship courses during their second and third years in the program. They must complete a minimum of 600 supervised hours between the two courses, inclusive of time spent in the classroom. Of the 600 hours, 240 must be direct service hours. Our expectation is that students would complete a minimum of 300 supervised hours during the intermediate practicum course, with at least 120 direct service hours, and a minimum of 300 supervised hours during the internship course, with at least 120 direct service hours.

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A requirement of CACREP and one that is shared by the rehabilitation counseling program is that students must be covered by an individual professional counseling liability insurance policy while enrolled in practicum and internship classes.

Students must be covered by this type of insurance policy even if the fieldwork site provides insurance coverage for volunteer interns and/or employees.

Professional counseling liability insurance policies are often available at reasonable costs through student membership in professional counseling associations.

The classroom instructors for our practicum and internship classes will reinforce this requirement and should be able to help students identify options for obtaining insurance coverage.

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CACREP offers guidelines related to the qualifications and experience of those who serve as fieldwork supervisors.

They indicate that supervisors should have a master’s degree or higher, preferably in counseling or a related profession.

CACREP also indicates that supervisors should have other relevant licenses or certifications. This guideline is assessed on a case-by-case basis as in many rehabilitation counseling settings once the educational requirement is met no additional certifications or licenses are required.

I should also note that we require all of our classroom instructors who teach intermediate practicum or internship to hold the Certified Rehabilitation Counselor credential, so that in every case, at least one of the individuals involved in the supervision of the student will be a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor.

Fieldwork supervisors should have a minimum of two years of professional experience.

Fieldwork supervisors should be knowledgeable about the rehabilitation counseling program’s expectations, requirements, and evaluation procedures for students. One of the ways that we work to meet this guideline is by using this presentation to help familiarize supervisors with our program. Later in the presentation there will be information about where to find additional resources and information.

And finally, fieldwork supervisors should have relevant training in counselor supervision. One of the ways that we work to meet this guideline is, once again, by using this presentation to help prepare supervisors to supervise our students.

After you complete this presentation we will ask you to share some information with us designed to help us to make sure that fieldwork supervisors meet these qualifications and know how to access additional information about supervising interns.

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I’d like to take a moment to highlight some of the benefits of supervising an intern.

Providing supervision brings work-ready graduate students to rehabilitation counseling and clinical organizations.

These interns can assist with serving caseloads and enhance the capacity of organizations to serve their clients.

Providing supervision also positions supervisors to contribute to the development of counselors who will be practicing in the near future and for years to come.

Interns bring to the fieldwork experience up-to-date training in counseling theories and practice.

And finally, providing supervision offers organizations the opportunity to identify and get to know individuals who may help to meet the organization’s staffing needs in the future.

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Here I’d like to offer suggestions related to supervising rehabilitation counseling interns. Many of these practices will be reinforced in a different setting in the practicum and internship classes.

Meet with your intern or interns an average of one hour per week for supervision.

Teach interns the record-keeping practices employed by your organization.

Model ethical behavior and discuss ethical counseling practice with interns.

Work with interns on issues related to developing and maintaining professional boundaries

Help prepare interns to work with the diverse range of clients served by your organization

Familiarize interns with approaches to responding to critical incidents.

As a supervisor, consider the importance of staying up-to-date with respect to trends in the field, including counseling approaches and counseling strategies.

Identify professional development needs of your interns and help them to determine how to meet those needs.

Familiarize your interns with practices related to confidentiality and other legal requirements associated with your organization.

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Interns will find it helpful if their field supervisor is clear about their expectations and the structure of the fieldwork experience. Setting a schedule of supervision meetings is one such practice. Likewise supervisors can intentionally plan the content of the supervision sessions in order to help meet the developmental needs of the intern. If the organization endorses or requires interns to use certain techniques or theories, supervisors should consider building them into the supervision meetings; the same would be true for any standard practices related to documentation and case notes. Finally, we recommend setting clear expectations about professional conduct – and modeling that conduct for the interns you supervise.

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Many organizations already have a Service Learning Agreement in place between the organization and SDSU. Occasionally those agreements expire and need to be renewed or a new agency needs to set up a Service Learning Agreement. This agreement must be in place before interns can start accruing supervised fieldwork hours. If you need to set up an agreement or you aren’t sure if a Service Learning Agreement in in place, the practicum or internship instructor and the academic department’s Academic Support Coordinator can assist with the Service Learning Agreement.

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Next we’ll walk though the main steps involved in beginning and maintaining a supervisory relationship with an intern.

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First, identify a potential intern. We trust that you know best who would be a good fit for your organization. Practicum and internship instructors can help by answering questions and offering insight.

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Next, work with your intern to set goals. One important element of goal-setting is the Learning Plan that the student will be asked to complete in collaboration with the site supervisor and the course instructor. Students are asked to complete the learning plan near the beginning of the semester.

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Next, host the first site visit. Your intern will work with you to schedule a meeting that includes you, the intern, and their university instructor. Together you will review, refine and sign the Learning Plan you and the intern have created.

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Next, conduct weekly supervision. CACREP requires that interns have an average of one hour of interaction with their supervisor per week. When you interact with interns you might discuss the intern’s cases, documentation, ethical concerns, progress toward goals, professional conduct and related issues. The site visit meetings with the SDSU course instructor also count toward these supervision hours.

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In between opportunities to meet with your intern we ask that you be available to provide additional support as needed. Between scheduled meetings you may need to address issues or questions that are raised by your intern, such as documentation, ethics questions, clarification about procedures, and so forth.

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Near the end of the semester, we will ask you to complete the Evaluation of Student Intern form. A copy of this form can be found in our clinical manual.

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And finally, host the second and final site visit. Your intern will work with you to schedule a final site visit that includes you, the intern and their course instructor. Together you will review, discuss and sign the Evaluation of Student Intern form and review the Learning Plan goals created at the beginning of the internship.

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In closing, I’d like to thank you for taking in this presentation and for supervising one or more rehabilitation counseling program interns. I would also like to mention a few additional resources that could be useful to you as you provide supervision. The rehabilitation counseling program’s Clinical Manual and Student Handbook are both available on the program website. These documents contain a lot of information about the rehabilitation counseling program and student fieldwork. Additionally, the intern’s practicum or internship course instructor is an important source of information and support for site supervisors and site supervisors should contact the course instructor with questions or concerns related to supervision of interns.

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And finally, here is my contact information. Once again, thank you very much for your willingness to supervise rehabilitation counselors in-training.