Revisiting our Roots: Innovative Community-Based Psychosocial Fieldwork Programs: Classroom to Clinic

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**Recommended Citation**
Santalucia, MS, OTR/L, Susan; Mollo, MS, OTR/L, Kimberly S.; and Angelis, EdD, OTR/L, Tina, "Revisiting our Roots: Innovative Community-Based Psychosocial Fieldwork Programs: Classroom to Clinic" (2014). *Department of Occupational Therapy Posters and Presentations*. Paper 11.
[https://jdc.jefferson.edu/otpresentations/11](https://jdc.jefferson.edu/otpresentations/11)

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Lab Sessions Provided the Link Between Classroom and Clinic

OT 558: ENHANCING SOCIAL PARTICIPATION COURSE

Lecture (2 hours a week) & Lab (2 hours a week)
Academic coursework focuses on:
- Diagnosis and population based content in alignment with new DSM V
- Theoretical perspectives/client-centered & holistic OT practice
- Evaluation tools
- Consultation strategies (health & wellness, prevention)
- Occupation-based group development, implementation, and assessment
- Evidence-based psychosocial OT interventions to enhance social participation

Learning Activities: Critical Reflection & Transformation
- Organizational Profile conducted with clients and administration
- Group Protocol produced based upon the needs of the site
- Activity Resource Guides (ARGs): WIKI reviewing student’s evidence based, site specific interventions during lab time
- Final Presentation to Site and Staff: review of interventions & outcomes, reflection on experiences, future recommendations

OBJECTIVES
1. Understand the core components of a community-based level I psychosocial experience that bridge and enhance student classroom learning.
2. Examine strategies to identify, create, and maintain partnerships with community based sites.
3. Explore 2-3 learning activities and/or strategies that facilitate student learning during the Level I experience in a community based psychosocial setting.

FIELDWORK LEARNING EXPERIENCE

Six students were partnered with a community-based site that did not have an occupational therapist on staff.

Fieldwork Level I consists of 26 hours onsite:
- 12 hours over 3 weeks onsite: developing rapport and relationships with clients and staff, gathering information for assignments (organizational profile, overall needs)
- Students rotate and provide the site with 12 groups over 6-8 weeks
  - Each student leads 2 group sessions onsite
  - Each student then serves as an aide to another student run group for an additional 2 group sessions onsite

Example of FW I Sites:
- Residential program for women in drug & alcohol recovery
- Residential program for adults with schizophrenia
- Day program for homeless veterans
- Day programs for individuals with intellectual disabilities
- Residential program for transgendered individuals in drug & alcohol recovery

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FACULTY-SITE/STUDENT COLLABORATION

SITE AND STUDENT FEEDBACK

Student Feedback:
- “This course in conjunction with OT 558 was a highlight of the entire program for me. It's placement in the final "full" semester of coursework boosted my confidence level in my skill as a blossoming practitioner and my ability to advocate for my profession. This was the most meaningful fieldwork experience out of the Level Is for me, and helped me feel prepared for whatever may come in my Level II Fieldworks.”

Sites Feedback:
- “This team of students have been very professional in attending, observing, and implementing meaningful activities to the individuals we serve.”
- “The self-directed learning and independence shown by the students has been a blessing.”

Successful FW Experiences
Enhanced Learning
Increased Student Satisfaction in Courses
Application versus knowledge based learning experience

Academic FW Coordinator Roles: Partnering with Community Sites

- Identify local mental health community sites and emerging practice areas
- Contact and visit sites with a proposal of partnership
- On-Campus Meet and Greet session between site supervisors and faculty instructors pre-FW experience to review roles/responsibilities
- Supervisory contract assignment for students to complete with site
- Student survey post fieldwork to evaluate experience at site
- Follow up visit with sites to share students’ feedback of experience
- Discuss with site their experiences and changes for future
- Identify additional “partnering” for win/win with other courses in curriculum

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