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Field Instruction 2

Professor Mark Jennings

Reflection 2

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This past week has been very challenging for me in regards to Voces Latinas, and their staff and how they handled certain situations. Last week, I had the opportunity to attend their second staff meeting. What transpired during this meeting was a very uncomfortable situation for me and other staff attending the meeting. What started as a formal meeting talking about, protocols and safety plan after an incident that occurred during office hours in their agency ended up in a hostile situation between a staff member who is from the LGBTQ community and my internship supervisor. The misused of pronouns during the staff meeting was the target for my supervisor to get judged, penalized and ridiculed in front of her team, the staff and me.

At the beginning I didn't know what was going on, then I received a text from my supervisor asking me if I heard her referred to this other individual as a she. I said no, you were addressing this person by their name. Then I was kicked out of the meeting for no reason. I thought I had done something wrong because I didn't respond to my name when I was trying to remove my mask. I right away texted Ms. Rivera and asked but I didn't expect for her calling me crying to tell me what had happened.

My supervisor was reprimanded in front of the staff for using the wrong pronoun. She was told that due to her lack of sensitivity, she had re-victimized this individual who has been struggling with society and her sexual preference. She was asked to apologize and to write an apology letter to this individual. My supervisor became ill and had to take some days off to calm herself and think things through.

I personally don't agree with the way things were handled. As professionals, I believe there are some standards that have to be reviewed and understanding that misunderstandings and miscommunication can happen is critical to do an intervention. As a social worker intern, I am unable to say anything. Perhaps I heard all the conversation and I didn't hear Ms. Rivera address anyone with a specific pronoun. The way this situation was handled was incorrect. The wrong words were used and were very hurtful words for my supervisor to hear and to accept. There were many ethical dilemmas around this uncomfortable situation. The way it was handled I believed was very unprofessional.

My concern right now is the decision my supervisor is planning to take. She is considering resigning. She states she cannot face her team after how she was presented in front of them, as someone with no emotion and feeling, someone who re-victimized someone and the shame of knowing she had to apologize for something she feels she didn't do. I am supporting Ms. Rivera because as a human I know we can make mistakes and unfortunately others are too quick to judge. I'm praying that Ms. Rivera will reconsider her decision and decide to stay.