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“Seminar Paper #1 – Competency #1”

Reflective Assessment on Competency #1

1. In what ways have I accomplished this competency/practice behaviors?

Having a standard guideline for practicing ethical and professional behavior within this vocation proved to be necessary to me working in my current internship. I have had to rely on what the NASW Code of Ethics and Principles suggested when dealing with students who do not share in my faith-based worldview to resolve their issues. Being able to listen to the client without judgment and opinion has allowed me to better understand the client’s perspective and not project my own. I have also developed my skills and knowledge in the use of technology as a main form of communication to compensate for the student’s busy schedules when I need to relay information or connect. I am mindful of my verbiage in electronic communication, keeping it to the point, professional, and not jeopardizing any confidential information about the client that others should not see.

2. How has my thinking changed over time?

When I decided to go into this field of study, I thought that it would be a good fit of a profession that supports my personal views and faith. While the history of the social work profession established itself from faith-based initiatives and people, I now understand that many do not operate from that platform and some people have or find different pathways to reach social

stability and wellness. I also realized that it is not my place to be the “problem solver”, but act as a guide to help the client reach their own goals through their self-determination.

3. What are the practice behaviors that indicate my competency in this area?

During my practicum I have used the counsel of my Field Instructor to discuss situations and issues that my clients are facing where my current skills and knowledge are limited. This helps me maintain accountability to my clients and myself so that the best possible pathways are used to service the clients. Setting clear boundaries in the working relationship with students also helped me establish the expectation of the roles that is required of by both the client and I to avoid any misunderstanding, relationship dependency, and unrealistic hopes.

4. What curriculum content areas (social policy, practice, etc.) relate to successfully completing this competency?

For this particular competency relying on all the content of the curriculum courses aided me to make ethical decisions and display professional behavior. In the Generalist Social Work Practice for Individuals and Families, I gained understanding as to what are my responsibilities to clients, coworkers, other professionals, society, and to the profession itself. While our goals as social worker are to facilitate the client’s well-being, there are other aspects that must be taken into consideration where legal obligations takes precedence when issues of suicide ideation, child endangerment, threats to others, for example, requires us to breach the confidentiality clause with the client to protect them and/or others. In these dilemmas we must rely on the Code of Ethics to make professional judgments.

5. What learning experiences helped me to accomplish this competency?

The experiences in my practicum that have helped me accomplish this competency is learning about how to apply social work skills, knowledge, and theories I gained in class, combined with the profession’s ethical codes and principles in practical application to this particular population.

Learning about new systems of communications and apps for networking between different departments and keeping connectivity between students, faculty, and staff has also broaden by technical skills and repertoire.

6. What “gaps” can I identify in my learning experience? What will I do about these “gaps”? (In your Professional Growth Plan, identify goals for continued personal and professional growth and discuss how you plan to reach these goals).

I believe the “gaps” in my present learning experience are keeping clear boundaries with clients regarding up to what point do I cut-off with the client according to the protocols of the agency that I intern at. Sometimes students do not respond promptly or miss deadlines that they must keep to pass their internship and classes, however, I struggle with wanting to bend agency protocols in lieu of the student’s success. I intend to implement a more structured communication model with the students to promote greater accountability on the client’s part to reach their goals and come to a clearer understanding that I am also accountable to carry out the tasks and follow the regulations as set forth by the agency.

Integration

1. What value and ethical dilemmas have challenged you in your fieldwork?

The most challenging value and ethical dilemma that I have faced in the fieldwork so far has been to self-regulate my personal views on how a client should deal with their situation. For me my point of reference is always what I have been taught about my faith and having Christian values, so I have had to learn or lean on other methods and perspectives that would suit the client’s needs even though they may not be congruent to what I believe to be best.

2. How did you (or might you) resolve them?

One of the techniques and practices that I have incorporated to resolve this problem is to lean more on applying active listening skills, non-verbal responses, and open-ended

questioning. I have found that when using these interviewing techniques and others, most clients when given the opportunity to share and express themselves in a non-judgmental safe space tend to come up with their own resolutions.

3. How did you use reflection and self-regulation to manage personal values?

One thing that I have done to help use reflection and self-regulation to manage my personal values is to understand that I have not always been successful dealing with some of my own situations. Even though I have tried to follow Christian moral codes, principles, and wisdom, I also went through some of the situations just like my clients. Reflecting on my own experiences and what I needed at that time of conflict allowed me to afford the same to my client.

4. Provide examples of how you demonstrated professional demeanor in behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication.

My internship is predominantly via remote, and I have a lot of zoom meetings with my Field Instructor, students, other interns, and faculty staff. I am careful that even though I am working from home that I am properly dressed, my location is free from distractions, and I conducting the zoom meetings in an appropriate room (not in my bedroom). When I write my emails, I tend to be polite and concise, I am mindful that people have a busy schedule and reading a long email can be tedious, so I make sure that my electronic communication is not too wordy. When conversing with someone I pay attention to my body language, especially my facial expressions so I do not convey a wrong non-verbal messages.

5. Reflect on the use of technology in your field agency. How is it used?

The use of technology is the fastest mode of communication. In the college setting that I am interning in uses social media, apps, digital platforms, and networking to keep students, faculty, and staff connected. At the onset of Covid-19 technology kept the flow of

information and communication lines open between students and staff and has begun to establish the “go to” way of conducting business. In my agency I am required to evaluate my students at their agency by conducting site visits, however, it was permissible for me to do some of them via zoom meetings. In situations where all parties cannot agree to meet in-person, through the use of technology I was still able to complete my assigned tasks.

6. Provide examples of how you used supervision to guide your professional behavior and judgment.

During one of my weekly sessions with a student, she confided to me that she has been having altercations in one of her classes with a professor that she thought was specifically “picking on her”. The student also gained support from other students to justify her complaints and because of her emotional state was to the point of dropping her class and changing her major, which would lengthen her time in college. I referred to my Field Instructor for her feedback, suggesting a counseling session with another professor that the student respected to help find a resolution to the situation. The matter was discussed, and the eventual session did resolve the issue the student was having with the professor.