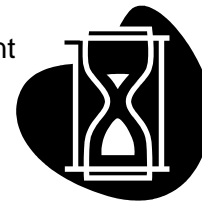


Models of Fieldwork

Part-time Fieldwork

Description:

A model of fieldwork that allows the student to complete a fieldwork placement on a part-time basis over a longer period of time than if the placement were completed full-time over the standard period of time.



How it Works:

In this type of fieldwork, the fieldwork educator identifies an interest and availability in providing a part-time fieldwork placement. Such placements may involve working half days or only on certain days of the week. Students who express interest, meet with the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator (AFC) to discuss suitability for the placement. Once a student is matched with the fieldwork educator, meetings occur between the AFC or Outreach Developer, fieldwork educator, and student to clarify expectations and negotiate the student's schedule on the basis of the fieldwork site's needs, student's needs, and the student's academic schedule (if applicable).

Strategies for Success:

The **role of the fieldwork educator** is to provide a setting for a meaningful fieldwork experience to the student on a part-time basis. A key focus will be on providing continuity for the clients, the student and other staff. Ideas for creating such an environment include:

- Meet with the student and AFC/Outreach Developer prior to the placement in order to clarify expectations, plan a work schedule, and discuss concerns.
- Provide the student with a comprehensive orientation binder/folder that he/she can refer back to as needed throughout the placement.
- Develop learning objectives with the student and discuss guidelines with regards to a timeline.
- Meet with the student one-on-one each week to provide information about activities/events that have occurred during the student's absence.
- Develop strategies along with the student to ensure he/she has access to information shared at missed team meetings. If the fieldwork educator has attended the team meeting, one idea is for the fieldwork educator to track what was discussed and communicate it clearly and in a timely fashion to the student.
- Consider assigning clients that the student can follow and work with for an extended period of time, so that he/she has the opportunity to evaluate the effectiveness of his/her interventions, analyze the expected and actual outcomes, and re-formulate the plan as needed.
- Keep a log to track the student's performance in order have accurate information for the evaluation process readily available when it is needed.

The **role of the student** is to be a willing and active participant in the fieldwork placement. Some suggested strategies are:

- Be prepared to be flexible.
- Use class discussions as a way to reflect on fieldwork experiences and explore different theoretical perspectives with instructors and fellow classmates.
- Use time away from the fieldwork setting to reflect on practice.
- Practice good time management techniques.

The **role of the University** includes: educating students and fieldwork educators about this model, and assisting with preparation for placement for both the fieldwork educator and the

student to ensure all have the same information and that roles/expectations are clear. The University will also be available to provide ongoing guidance and advice to the student and fieldwork educator during the placement.

Advantages of part-time fieldwork include:

- May be an option for therapists who work part-time or are in a position where part of their work is not suitable for fieldwork.
- Therapists have “down time” from the student.
- Allows for flexibility for the student who has a family, is managing a home, or who has financial demands requiring that they work part-time.
- Students can see the outcomes of the therapy over a longer time frame.
- Students may have more time to solidify their skills.
- Allows time for relationships to develop with other team members and with clients.
- The relationship between theory and practice is increased when students can learn simultaneously in the classroom and in a clinical setting and can integrate the two experiences.

References (Note: Suggested readings are marked by an *)

*Adelstein, L., Cohn, E., Baker, R. & Barnes, M. (1990). A part-time level II fieldwork program. The American Journal of Occupational Therapy, 44(1), 60-65.

O'Connor, L. & Collier, G.F. (2000). Emerging Fieldwork Models. In S.C. Merrill & P.A. Crist (Eds.), Meeting the Fieldwork Challenge (Self-Paced Clinical Course, (Lesson 9), The American Occupational Therapy Association, Inc.

Please contact the Outreach Developer for your region, _____, or the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator at (204) 789-3992 if you would like more information about this model or the fieldwork program.

