

Summary Report
Service-Learning Collaboration
Division of Counseling and Family Therapy (University of Missouri – St. Louis)
The Haven of Grace
Community Alternatives, Inc.
Angela D. Coker, Ph.D.

CNS ED 6300: Foundations of Community Counseling

Course Description:

This course provides students who will work in community agency settings with an understanding of the historical and philosophical background of community counseling. It examines the forces that influenced the development of community counseling, unique aspects of community counseling, and the role of the community counselor within the broad spectrum of human services. Students are introduced to research and current methods of practice with regard to a variety of critical professional issues related to practice in the community counseling setting. In addition, this course also has a Service-Learning component. Students are required to complete a minimum of 15 hours of service-learning.

Course Objectives: By the end of the course, students will:

- Understand the historical, philosophical, societal, cultural, economic, and political dimensions of the community counseling field;
- Understand the uniqueness of the community counseling paradigm;
- Understand the roles, functions, and professional identity of community counselors;
- Understand the preferred practice related to selected critical tasks involved in the community counselor role;
- Understand the wide variety of the settings in which community counselors practice;
- Have an awareness of the implications of sociocultural, demographic and lifestyle diversity relevant to community counseling, including, but not limited to the effects of socioeconomic status, unemployment, aging, gender, race, ethnicity, culture, and sexual orientation;
- Understand the general principles of community intervention, consultation, educations, outreach, and program evaluation;
- Understand the organizational, fiscal, and legal dimensions of the institutions and settings in which community counselors practice;
- Understand effective strategies for client advocacy in public policy and government relations issues.

What is service-learning?

Service-learning is an approach by which students learn and develop through intentional organized service which is conducted in a way that meets the needs of a community in collaboration with an academic institution and community agency.

For many community organizations/agencies, students can augment and assist in addressing a variety of program needs and service deliveries. For students service-learning is an opportunity to enrich and apply classroom knowledge, explore career options, develop multicultural competences, improve citizenship, develop occupational skills, enhance personal growth, establish professional job links, and foster an awareness

of social problems. Service-learning can often enhance in a student a sense of social responsibility, commitment to human service, and social justice advocacy.

Ways students can participate in service-learning. Activities (taken from MOCC Faculty Fellows Service-learning Guide 2007-2008):

- Organize a fund-raiser for a non-profit organization
- Conduct a voter-registration drive and educate clients on the democratic process.
- Paint murals or help beautify a community or agency around a community theme
- Conduct a food drive, book drive, clothing drive
- Tutor children
- Develop a support group
- Develop a workshop to educate clients about depression, career development, getting into college, stress management, substance abuse, teen pregnancy, HIV/AIDS
- Educate individuals about their rights as clients
- Assist grass roots groups that advocate for the rights of persons who have low income or other disadvantage
- Organize the filing system and/or daily operations of a small nonprofit organization
- Develop and facilitate personal growth/support groups for a variety of populations
- Assist in counseling individuals
- Help individuals learn how to use computers
- Assist organizations with their computer needs
- Assist agency with the publication of a newsletter
- Create promotional or informational materials for an agency or outreach program
- Help agency with an upcoming event
- Assist with or establish a literacy program
- Organize letter writing campaigns to local, state, national politicians for increase funding
- Develop a family connection program
- Write stories for neighborhood or town papers.
- Respond to Santa letters
- Help clients with writing resumes
- Write stories, poems using the community service experience as a starting point
- Use translation skills to help new immigrants articulate needs and connect them to services.
- Help translate information concerning organization programs into languages or dialects common among community members.
- Develop ways to help children and teens of various ethnic backgrounds understand their own cultural backgrounds and ancestry.

- Set up workshops to inform community members about the history of an issue and about possible strategies for resolving the issue.
- Establish a community food bank.
- Conduct public issues forums
- Work with local government or public institutions to help them solve community problems (e.g., unemployment, teenage pregnancy, teen drop out rates).
- Assist with the formation of a mental health action group.
- Educate mental health peers on a particular topic (e.g., counselor wellness, new manage-care policies and how it impacts clients and agencies)
- Establish or work on a crisis hotline
- Assist with the development or running of a domestic violence shelter for women and children.
- Establish a clearing house of volunteer services to direct clients to needed sources of assistance or help with research.
- Assist with grant-writing

Identified needs/services to be offered at the Haven of Grace:

The Haven of Grace
1225 Warren Street
St. Louis, MO 63106
314 621-6507 Phone
www.havenofgracestl.org

- Conduct a clothing and household items drive to benefit the women and children of the Haven of Grace
- Conduct workshops (e.g., career development, stress management, and other topics to be)
- Offer a personal growth group to assist women in developing and working toward personal goals.
- Offer some one-on-one personal counseling
- Generate community publicity about the work of Haven of Grace
- Develop and facilitate a “talk group” for the young sons of residents of Haven of Grace.

Identified needs/services to be offered at Community Alternatives

3738 Chouteau Ave # 200
St. Louis, MO 63110
(314) 772-7449
www.community-alternatives.org

- Work with Refugee population to in a wide variety of activities:
- Tutoring children and adults
- English Support (reading mail)
- Social Acculturation (getting them familiar with the community)
- Generate community awareness and knowledge about the work of Community Alternatives, Inc.

The Community Counseling Model As a Conceptual Framework

Community Counseling is a “comprehensive helping framework of intervention strategies and services that promotes the personal development and well-being of all individuals and communities. The community counseling model comprises four service components: (a) direct client, (b), indirect client, (c) direct community, and (d) indirect community services.” (Lewis, Lewis, Daniels, & D’Andrea, 2003, p. 6)

- 1. Direct Client Services: Counseling**
 - Face-to-face counseling and crisis intervention
 - Special topic counseling groups (substance abuse, HIV/AIDS, domestic violence groups, etc.)

- 2. Indirect Client Service: Making Systemic Changes and Public Policy**
 - Consultation within clients’ helping networks
 - Promoting self-help groups to clients
 - Linkage with other helping systems in the community
 - Advocacy for groups such as people who have experienced chronic mental health problems (e.g., influencing public policy to prevent or reduce the occurrence of mental and physical health problems by influencing educational, corporate-industrial, social, and political systems).

- 3. Direct Community Services:**
 - Facilitating/developing Training Programs, Group Experiences (development & education “personal growth groups”), Skill-Building Programs (public-speaking, computer technology, literacy, etc.), Education for Everyday Living (relationship-building, decision-making, time management, etc.)

- 4. Indirect community services:**
 - Advocacy
 - Planning programs and activities that best meet the needs of the community.
 - Outline strategies for confronting negative sociopolitical forces, and collaborating with other community agencies to respond to community needs.
 - Respond to community needs (community, employment, medical care, food, housing, etc.)

Lewis, J.A., Lewis, M.D., Daniels, J.A., & D’Andrea, J.J. (2003). *Community counseling: Empowerment strategies for a diverse society*. Pacific Grove, CA: Wadsworth. ISBN 0-534-50626-7

Haven of Grace Summary Report of Service Learning Activities

About the Division of Counseling and Family Therapy

The Community Counseling Program of the Division of Counseling and Family Therapy prepares professional counselors, including community, career, addictions, couples/family, and child and adolescent counselors, to serve the mental health needs of culturally diverse individuals, groups, couples, and families in need. The Division's outreach extends to schools, colleges and universities, community based organizations, business and industry, as well as independent practice. The Division strives to develop a culturally diverse student population and to draw students from local, regional, national, and international locations (Mission Statement taken from DCFT website 7/9/08).

About the Haven of Grace

The Haven of Grace, a ministry of faith, is a residential and aftercare program providing a safe, nurturing and educational environment for homeless, pregnant women by focusing time and resources on mothers and children as they become families and establish their lives together in the community (taken from Haven of Grace website 7/9/08).

Summary of Service Learning Activities

Seventeen graduate students in the Division of Counseling and Family Therapy at The University of Missouri-St. Louis took part in service learning activities during the Spring 2008 semester. They developed a variety of service projects designed to meet the needs of clients receiving services at the Haven of Grace. These projects consisted of three specialized workshops, facilitation of one personal growth group, individual counseling sessions, and a household item drive.

As a result of these experiences, students reported that they learned a lot about community counseling and had developed a greater sense of professional identity as counselors, an enhanced commitment to client advocacy, and increased levels of multicultural competence. They also reported feeling good about their experiences and look forward to more opportunities for service learning.

Detailed Summary:

Workshop Topic: Stress, Time Management and Budgeting (90 minutes)

Student Presenters: Kacie Marler & Della Koster

Students conducted an informative and interactive workshop highlighting the causes of stress, ways to positively cope with it (physical and mental), ways to manage time, and financial budgeting.

Workshop Topic: Understanding the World of Work

Covered topics such as how to find a job, resume writing, and interviewing techniques.

Student Presenters: Kristin Harrington & Angie Dockins

Workshop Topic: **Parental wellness for the single mother**
 Main objective was to educate young mothers on the importance of self-care and wellness strategies for optimal living. Examples included taking time for self while caring for others, in addition to managing anger.

Student Presenters: Rachel Calhoun & Keli Creighton

One-on-one Counseling: **Direct one-on-one supervised counseling services** were offered to residents. The counseling sessions took place weekly (between March 2008 – April 2008) for a duration of 50-60 minutes each at the Haven of Grace. Counseling students were trained and supervised by the course instructor (Angela Coker, Ph.D., LPC) and met with her weekly regarding client development and case conceptualization.

Counseling Students: Amy Bone, Jennifer Atkinson, Jennifer Trumpet, & Reba Rice Portman

Growth Group **A 90-minute six-session personal growth group** was facilitated by two graduate students. The purpose of the group was to provide participants with a venue to explore and process their thoughts and feelings around motherhood, their identities as women, and life in general. The group was lead under the supervision of the course instructor (Angela Coker, Ph.D.).

Group Facilitators: Jennifer Atkinson & Donna Hykes

Group Support (for boys) The purpose of this project was to provide a place for the male children of the women in the *Aftercare Program* to have a place to talk, share their concerns and dreams, in addition to connect. The group was to be led by two African American male graduate students as a means of providing mentorship. This project did not see completion due to low client involvement. It is our hope that this initiative can be reactivated again.

Proposed Group Facilitators: Mario Burns & Ryan Willis

Project: Clothing Drive & Household Item Drive: This was a very successful endeavor. Students collected over \$750.00 in monetary gifts (with matching funds from a local business man). They also collected several household baby items, accessories, and furniture.

Students: Suzie Berg, Karen Gottlieb, and Dawn Hiatt

Community Alternative, Inc.
Summary Report of Service Learning Activities

About the Division of Counseling and Family Therapy

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About Community Alternatives, Inc.

Community Alternatives is a community-based mental health agency that specializes in serving individuals with a variety of presenting issues including homelessness, substance abuse, and HIV/AIDS treatment. The organization also has a number of innovative programs designed to assist families, the poor, and immigrant populations.

Summary of Service learning Activities:

Ten graduate students in the Division of Counseling and Family Therapy at The University of Missouri-St. Louis took part in service learning activities during the Spring 2008 semester. They developed a variety of service projects designed to meet the needs of clients receiving services at the Community Alternative, Inc. These projects consisted of working with refugee clients in need of English support (help with reading in English and sorting through regular mail), providing social support to immigrants (from Somalia, Iraq, Afghanistan, and West Africa) who need assistance learning how to use public transportation, and providing tutoring and social support to immigrant teens. Students also conducted a fundraiser to raise funds for client assistance. In addition, one student in particular had specialized training and experience as a public relations professional. This student was able to use her talents to assist administrators with updating the agency's public relations database.

As a result of these experiences, students reported that they learned a lot about community counseling and had developed a greater sense of professional identity as counselors, an enhanced commitment to client advocacy, and increased levels of multicultural competence. They also reported feeling good about their experiences and look forward to more opportunities for service learning.

Detailed summary:

Public Relations

Project: Worked with Community Alternative administrators to update public relations contact lists.

Student: Jennifer Kerner

**Working with
refugee teens:**

Students worked with Community Alternatives, Inc. and Gitana Productions (an arts program designed to help immigrant teens acculturate and connect with other teens through expressions of dance, drama, and poetry). Students assisted program leaders and conducted an evaluation of the program through one-on-one interviews with the teens.

Students: Rachel Glass & Amanda Hollon

**Social Support
Project:**

This project consisted of students providing social support and companionship to a family from West Africa. Students met weekly with family members and provided opportunities for them to get familiar with the St. Louis area through social outings such as going to the library, eating out at restaurants, or touring famous St. Louis landmarks.

Students: LaTonya Reed & Melissa Fross

**Social Support
Project:**

The purpose of this project was to help an immigrant from Iraq learn how to navigate the public transportation system. The student also provided the individual with social support and friendship.

Student: Hayman Ali

Fundraiser Project: Students conducted a walk-a-thon and personal items drive to help raise funds for newly settling immigrant clients. Students were successful in raising \$300.00

Students: Jane Smith, Hayman Ali, and Jennifer Kerner

**Tutoring Support
Project:**

The purpose of this project was to partner students with two Somali siblings in order to help them with academic and English language development. However, this project was not completed due to client response. The students were disappointed in the outcome, but look forward to other service learning opportunities.

Students: Amanda Hehner & Casey O'Donnell