School Counseling Program Evaluation Results

Year 1 of 3 Year Ongoing Program Evaluation:

2014-2015 Site Supervisor Perspective on the School Counseling Internship Experience

Prepared by: Caroline S. Clauss-Ehlers, Ph.D.

May 24, 2015

As indicated in the mid-cycle report submitted to CACREP, the program evaluation process for school counseling programs shifted. Previously this process involved simultaneously administering three surveys (i.e., the Employer Survey of Former Graduate Student, the Site Supervisor Perspective on the School Counseling Internship Experience, and the School Counseling Graduates Survey) once every three years. The current recommendation is now to implement one survey each year. As such, the Program in School Counseling implemented the Site Supervisor Perspective on the School Counseling Internship Experience during the 2014-2015 academic year as the first phase of this three-tiered program evaluation. The two additional surveys will be implemented in 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 as required by CACREP. The following presents a summary of results for the Site Supervisor Perspective on the School Counseling Internship Experience and related recommendations. The Program in School Counseling thanks internship site supervisors for their participation.

Summary Site Supervisor Perspective on the School Counseling Internship Experience. The Site Supervisor Perspective survey asks site supervisors for their perspective on their work with school counseling interns. Responses for this survey ranged from Strongly Disagree/1 to Strongly Agree/5. Of those internship site supervisors who responded, they reported that the internship provided an active learning experience for student interns (i.e., 4.83), challenged students to think for themselves (i.e., 4.50), helped supervisees accomplish their goals (i.e., 4.50), afforded the opportunity to perform independently (i.e., 4.50), and implemented elements of the ASCA model (i.e., 4.83).

All site supervisors (i.e., 100% of the response) reported that school counseling interns contacted them regularly to discuss their schedules and expectations; reported necessary changes in schedules or unavoidable absences in advance; attended regularly and fully participated in internship activities; made up missed days; complied with school standards of appropriate dress and style; adhered to school rules, policies, and practices; followed guidelines concerning length of school day and school calendar; learned site supervisor’s roles and responsibilities; attended school functions where possible; participated fully in university seminars; and kept a personal portfolio of their work.

All site supervisors (i.e., 100% of the response) reported that, as supervisors, they accepted responsibility for structuring and scheduling the student intern’s time and work in the school; provided students with a range of experiences; were a good resource for students; communicated and collaborated with Rutgers University; communicated and collaborated with school district personnel; communicated regularly about student expectations for the intern’s work in the school; and provided ongoing feedback to the student about his/her performance. Among those who responded, 100% of site
supervisors supported the student evaluation process conducted by the site supervisor and handed in to the university supervisor.

When asked about major strengths, a key theme was that the internship experience allowed interns to be actively immersed in the school counselor’s role and responsibilities through hands-on involvement in both the life of the school and the school counseling program. When asked about areas of growth for the internship experience, it was recommended that students continue to build rapport with the students with whom they work, provide college and career advisement, and increase learning about risk assessment.

With regard to how Rutgers can support site supervisors during the internship experience, site supervisors shared that Rutgers has been highly supportive. They appreciated the professional development workshops available to site supervisors, the community, and stakeholders. One respondent expressed how Rutgers is fully involved in the internship experience and commended the university’s participation in the learning that occurs during the internship process. One recommendation was to provide a stipend or professional hours to off-set the time involved for site supervisors to provide a quality experience. Another recommendation was for Rutgers to provide programs for high school students to enhance the high school experience.

When asked if they would accept another intern from Rutgers in the future, site supervisors were enthusiastic and supportive. They shared that Rutgers interns are sincere, engaged, prepared, and a pleasure to work with. One respondent expressed how having an intern brought value beyond the school counseling office-- to the larger community of staff and students.

**Program Follow Through on Previous Recommendations**

As per CACREP accreditation guidelines, our last site supervisor evaluation was conducted in 2011. Recommendations were implemented at that time and are reflected in the positive outcomes reported above. One such recommendation, for instance, was to “build in professional development experiences for site supervisors.” The Rutgers University Program in School Counseling has built in a Professional Development Workshop Series that is implemented on an annual basis. Workshops are delivered through our network of professionals and cover topics such as the role of technology in counseling, counseling in higher education settings, note taking, Intervention and Referral Services (I & R S), and the multi-faceted role of the school counselor, among others. In addition, the Program in School Counseling hosts an annual site supervisor luncheon that promotes collaboration between the university and school communities. Another 2011 recommendation was to discuss the ASCA model with students and site supervisors. This conversation has been incorporated in the school counseling internship curriculum as well as in site supervisor meetings/communication.

**Future Recommendations**

The data indicates that our school counseling interns are valued for the contributions they make at their respective internship placements. School counseling interns bring added value to the life of the schools in which they are placed. This has a positive impact on the whole school environment. Site supervisors
enjoy working with our interns, and express an enthusiastic interest in continuing to do so. In addition, site supervisors report that they appreciate the efforts that Rutgers makes to support them in their role, provide ongoing communication, and collaborate in the intern’s ongoing learning.

Based on the data, one future recommendation is to have students learn more about risk assessment. The Program in School Counseling has already made efforts in this area. For instance, in Spring 2015, students and site supervisors were invited to participate in the Traumatic Loss Coalition of New Jersey’s professional development training, "More than Sad." This workshop specifically focused on suicide awareness and prevention training and was incorporated into the counseling program curriculum. A second recommendation is to continue to provide a professional development workshop on higher education advisement. Finally, school counseling students take a course in program evaluation and are thoughtful about school programming at elementary, middle, and high school levels. In response to the suggestion that Rutgers provide programs for high school students, a third recommendation might be to implement a professional development workshop on program development for interns and site supervisors.