Program Level Outcome (PLO) Assessment Report Summary

Program Level Outcomes for Alcohol and Drug Abuse Counseling: PLO-2

Upon successful completion of the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Counseling program, a student should be able to:

1. demonstrate proficiency in each of the core functions and performance domains of substance abuse counselors
2. function as ethical and competent entry-level substance abuse counselors, with an understanding of and sensitivity to the diverse populations which they will serve

What we looked at:

PLO-2 is supported by a variety of course-level SLOs throughout the AOD curriculum. We viewed results from the following course assessments:

- AOD-1, SLO #2 and 3
- AOD-2, SLO #2
- AOD-8, SLO #1 and 5
- AOD-9, SLO #1 and 3

What we found:

- From AOD-1, students obtain a foundation of knowledge upon which other courses build. Students build their awareness of the social, political, economic, and cultural context within which chemical dependency exists. Students excelled in this awareness when evaluated over the course of the semester with a variety of objective-type examination questions with 94% answering target questions correctly. Risk/resiliency factors pertaining to substance abuse were correctly identified by 91% of students. Evaluating modalities of treatment for chemical dependency is a critical step to developing individualized treatment plans. Treatment modalities were addressed during the second half of the course and final exam items related to this content showed that 77% of students were able to evaluate the models of treatment appropriate for various types of clients.

- From AOD-2, all students were able to explain short term and chronic effects of substance abuse from a neurobiological and pharmacological perspective.

- From AOD-8, students learn the theoretical foundations and practice applications of family and group counseling. Students learn to distinguish among such theoretical approaches as Rogerian Client-Centered, cognitive –based (Beck) and humanistic-existential. These approaches directly relate to developing competency as a substance abuse counselor. By the 8th week of the course, students were able to articulate the theory and techniques during class discussions, multiple choice exams, and essay questions. By the end of the semester all students demonstrated correct behavioral skill sets in role play scenarios.
From AOD-9, students must consider treatment approaches for patients with substance abuse issues and co-occurring mental health disorders, considering how to prioritize and integrate treatment approaches rather than treat them as separate issues. Students demonstrated at least 70% proficiency or higher, based upon results of identified exam questions including t/f and essay.

SUMMARY: Course level assessments from each of the above courses suggest that students are acquiring the skills, abilities, and knowledge needed to support them in functioning as ethical and competent entry-level substance abuse counselors.

What our next steps are:

- For AOD-1, changes in pedagogy and adding different measures may be attempted to verify the current assessments; more vignettes and assessment of fictionalized characters might help support an improvement in applying appropriate treatment modalities.

- For AOD-2, the instructor will continue to use a combination of measures including case vignettes and group exercises, supplemented by objective exam items.

- For AOD-8, the instructor will add more vignette practice before attempting role play components of leading a family therapy session.

- For AOD-9, the instructor will consider adding more assessment tools such as case studies/vignettes to measure progress throughout the semester.

SUMMARY: Pedagogical changes rather than content changes are contemplated to further support student’s learning.