The Learning Contract: A Guide to Your Professional Development

Below is a list of activities and assignments from the 2015-16 Scholars’ learning contracts. Because each Scholars field site offers unique learning opportunities, these are not required activities but instead meant to spark ideas for you to consider in developing your learning contract.

**Overall Program**

- Attend Behavioral Health Scholars seminars once a month to gain knowledge on how to effectively work with adolescents and transition age youth.
- I will incorporate information learned at the Behavioral Health Scholars seminars in my work with clients. I will write a reflection paper following each of the seminars which I will submit to my field instructor and discuss during supervision how to incorporate these topics into my direct practice with clients.

**Working with Adolescent and Transition-Age Youth**

- Participate and/or lead group activities with students which may help students with various issues such as trauma, bullying, and behavioral issues.
- Conduct assessments and observe students utilizing the strengths-based approach. Incorporate the empowerment theory during interventions to try to help students learn new behaviors and develop their strengths.
- Start the development of the transition plan for children who are 18 years old who are receiving case management services and need continued assistance as they are transitioning into adulthood.
- Critically evaluate the current intake procedures for minors. Collaboratively develop ways to conduct intakes for children and adolescents that are relevant to their experiences and respect patient confidentiality.
- Discuss with clients how social media impacts negatively and/or positively mental health and personal relationships.
- Assisting with transition of teens aging out of the pediatric care setting to adult care. Assistance to include providing resources on insurance and adult primary care facilities.

**Interprofessional Practice**

- Contact other social workers, mental health professionals, school administration, and school staff to address school-wide concerns such as bullying, student hunger, poverty, and or drug/alcohol usage.
- Participate in mental health meetings and discussions with different professionals including the principal, psychologist, school social workers, counselors, etc.
- Discuss the variance between my code of ethics as a social worker and the ethics practiced by my peers of different backgrounds in supervision.
- Discuss best treatment practices with treatment team, including therapists, medical doctors, expressive therapists, case managers, and insurance providers, in treatment team rounds, treatment planning and treatment reviews.
**Behavioral Health Practice (including Motivational Interviewing & SBIRT)**

- Present updates on policy changes on the federal, state and local legislation about service delivery impacting participants requiring mental health care.
- Be involved in community outreach projects to help alleviate the stigma on mental health.
- Student will discuss with supervisor different barriers that clients face when trying to receive mental health services with the goal of seeking resources and/or information that could help clients especially those that are Spanish-speaking immigrants that face unique barriers.
- Maintain awareness of both patient and family citizenship status and how this can affect access to health and community resources.
- Student will complete the SBIRT training so student is able to utilize this assessment tool when working with clients with potential risk for substance use.
- Clarify client’s presenting problem and use motivational Interviewing to determine their current stage of change.
- Use motivational interviewing techniques of reflective listening and open-ended questions to engage clients in the change process and reach health goals.

**Integrated Behavioral Health**

- I will advocate and empower youth to stand up for their rights and social justice issues they are passionate about. I will use their treatment goals they set to help them achieve an overall better quality of life in the mental health, health, employment, education and community settings.
- Educate patients during brief encounters about behavioral health strategies and tools that they can practice to manage behavioral health concerns such as depression or anxiety symptoms in collaboration with medical providers.
- I will participate in the Go Healthy program that encourages youth to eat healthier and educates them on the different food types and support a healthy life style.
- Attend healthcare providers’ morning huddles and offer assistance both at the beginning of the working day, and throughout the day, to counsel patients on smoking cessation, weight management, and behavioral health goals.
- Student will receive training and consultation from Dr. Z who is a psychiatrist that consults with professionals at the agency. Student will learn process of referral and warm handoff for clients needing medical evaluations according to their symptomatology.
- I will attend the nutrition classes offered by the agency to understand the impact of physical health upon mental health and vice versa. Additionally, I will write a reflection paper focusing on these impacts which I will submit to my field instructor.