Assessing Program Goals, Objectives, & Competencies: Internship/Postdoctoral Programs

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Purposes

To assist programs

- ...in understanding what Goals, Objectives and Competencies are
- ...in identifying Goals, Objectives and Competencies for their own program
- ...in understanding the connections between their Goals, Objectives and Competencies and the outcome data they choose to collect

Purposes cont...

To help programs understand

- ...the various types of data they may choose to collect
- ...the importance of making changes in their programs on the basis of data they collect.

Domain B:

Program Philosophy, Objectives, and Training Plan

- The program has a clearly specified philosophy of training, compatible with the mission of its sponsor institution and appropriate to the practice of professional psychology. The internship is an organized professional training program with the goal of providing high quality training in professional psychology. The training model and goals are consistent with its philosophy and objectives. The program has a logical training sequence that builds upon the skills and competencies acquired during doctoral training.
Domain B:

Program Philosophy, Training Plan, and Objectives

- The program has a clearly specified philosophy or model of training, compatible with the mission of its sponsoring institution and appropriate to the practice of professional psychology. The psychology postdoctoral residency is an organized, logically sequenced program. Its goal is to provide quality education and training that is primarily experiential in nature, and is aimed at preparing psychologists for professional psychology practice at advanced competency level in a substantive traditional or specialty practice area. The program training goals and objectives are consistent with its philosophy and model.

G&P Competencies – Domain B

Given its stated goals and expected competencies, the program provides and documents the minimal levels of achievement required of interns/residents to satisfactorily progress through and complete the program.

Domain F:

Program Self-Assessment and Quality Enhancement

The program demonstrates a commitment to excellence through self-study, which assures that its goals and objectives are met, enhances the quality of professional education and training obtained by its interns and training staff, and contributes to the fulfillment of its host institution’s mission.

What is a Goal?

- The result or achievement toward which effort is directed; aim; end.
- Goals tend to be broad
**Goal**

- Example: To Train Psychologists
- The goal should:
  - Fit the Mission of Institution
  - Fit the Activities Available to Trainees
  - Trainees (Postdocs/Interns) have been recruited with this goal in mind
  - Supervisors Are Interested in this Goal

**What is an Objective?**

- Something that one's efforts or actions are intended to attain or accomplish; e.g. a target
- More specific than a goal

**What is a competency?**

Competencies are usually defined as a skill or skill set expected of a practicing psychologist or a developing psychologist.

There can be a number of indicants to measure the competency

**Establishing General Goals, Specific Objectives, and Specific Competencies**

- General *goals* and specific *objectives* should follow from a combination of:
  (a) the program’s own model or philosophy with its values and principles; and
  (b) the generally accepted components of Internship/postdoctoral training as represented in the G&I.
These general goals and specific objectives are then translated into knowledge and specific competencies that are expected of program graduates.

Each competency can have a number of indicants (e.g. specific items from an evaluation form).

Creating a strong platform for outcome assessment

Goals
Objectives
& Competencies (GOC)

Goals, Objectives & Competencies…

1. Are measurable, achievable, aligned with each other
2. Support the Mission of the sponsor institution
3. Form a foundation upon which the “house of data” is built

GOAL # 1:
To produce new professionals who have the requisite knowledge and skills for entry into the practice of professional psychology. In this regard, we seek to develop the professional skills of our interns such that each is able to...

Objective A: treat individuals with a wide variety of psychological problems
Objective B: perform competent assessments
Objective C: conduct appropriate consultation and supervision of others
Objective D: initiate and use research
Objective E: function in an ethical manner
Objective F: appreciate the role of individual and cultural differences and diversity in psychological phenomena
### Objective B: Perform competent assessments

**Competencies:**

1. The trainee is able to administer, score and accurately interpret an MMPI.
2. The trainee is able to write a coherent and error-free assessment report.
3. The trainee is able to provide a client/patient with appropriate feedback in a useful manner.

### Align Data Collection with Goals, Objectives and Competencies

- How do you evaluate your trainees?
- How do you evaluate your supervisors?
- How do you evaluate your program?
- How do you evaluate your success?

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Once objectives are set, **COMPETENCIES** serve as the operationalized and measurable translation of the objectives.

**Objective B:** perform competent assessments

- **Competency 1:** interns will demonstrate proficiency in assessment of behavioral disorders, using...
- **Competency 2:** interns will demonstrate intermediate to advanced skills in differential diagnosis...

- The program engages in a variety of educational and **TRAINING ACTIVITIES** designed so that interns can become competent.

- **Activities for Objective B**
  - (1) complete written evaluations for patients which include:...
  - (2) use DSM to diagnose...
  - (3) receive ___ hours of supervision per week devoted to assessment issues
  - (4) attend an assessment seminar series.
Consistent with policies in higher education, programs need to show that they achieve expected outcomes. As such, each competency should have one or more ways of assessing its achievement – either in a quantitative or a qualitative manner.

**Objective B:** perform competent assessments.

**Assessment**
1. supervisor ratings
2. post internship employment activities

**Outcomes**
1. interns received supervisor ratings at a minimum of 3 (adequate) on a five-point scale at mid year, and a minimum of 4 (strong) at year end
2. graduates are employed in jobs that recognize and make use of their assessment skills (see Table x)

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**Linkage of Goals to Outcomes**

Accredited internship/postdoc programs will need to discuss how they:

- Provide the educational and training opportunities to reach the expected competencies;
- Assess those competencies;
- Define the minimum level of successful achievement of these competencies

**AND**

- Collect **AGGREGATE OUTCOME DATA** on the competency of all interns/postdocs and provide these data in Domain F.1(b)

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**What is aggregated outcome data?**

Aggregated outcome data are data that is compiled across interns and across years and/or data broken out by intern or postdoc cohorts and years.

It demonstrates the effectiveness of your training program, not just the accomplishments of an individual intern or postdoc over time.
### Types of Outcome Data

- Proximal, distal
- Qualitative, quantitative
- Formative, summative
- Internal, external

### Proximal

- Near, close at hand
- Proximal means nearer to the center of the training program or to the point of attachment to the program.
- Your current trainees
- Your current program

### Distal

- In the distance
- Distal: The more (or most) distant of two (or more) things. For example, the training program is the end the current training year and a distal measure would be at some point after the current training program.
- The opposite of distal is proximal.
- Assess your graduates/alumni/previous trainees

### Qualitative

Qualitative data is extremely varied in nature. It includes virtually any information that can be captured that is not numerical in nature.

Here are some of the major categories or types:
- In depth interviews
- Direct observation-narrative comments
- Written documents: “white papers”

*Important that the data are related to goals, objectives, competencies*
**Quantitative**

- Supervisor ratings of postdocs or interns
- Data on the level of achievement of competencies presented as frequency counts or means on rating scales by supervisors
- Percent of postdocs or interns achieving different ratings on the attainment of objectives
- Number of publications and presentations by postdocs
- Ratings of satisfaction with effectiveness of training at end of program and several years later.

*Important that the quantitative data is tied to goals, objectives and competencies.*

**Formative**

Specifically, training directors collect, organize, and analyze *formative* data during a specific training period; in the case of internship or postdocs likely to be the semiannual or midway evaluations; portfolios based on things like evaluating case presentations or assessment reports, work samples.

*Formative* data assessments are used to adjust instructional practices in an effort to address and maximize individual students’ learning, to gauge students’ progress; and assign evaluative scores (grades).

**Summative**

*Summative* data assessments produce valuable information that is used to make curriculum decisions, direct future instruction, and improve instructional practices.

*Summative* assessment data are collected at the end of a rotation, semester, or program; after instruction has taken place.

**Internal**

Within the program, current faculty, staff, trainees, and administrators.
External

External to the program. Consumers, home graduate programs of trainees, external agencies, employers of graduates.

Competency Evaluation: The Harbor-UCLA Experience
- Assessment of competencies and aggregated outcomes

Brainstorm
- Identify Different Data Sources that could be used in outcome measures of your program

Small Groups
- Identify 2 Proximal Outcomes for your Program
- Identify 2 Distal Outcomes for your Program
Small Groups

- Identify 2 Qualitative Outcome Measures
- Identify 2 Quantitative Outcome Measures

Small Groups

- Identify 2 Formative Outcome Measures for your program
- Identify 2 Summative Outcome Measures for your program

Small Groups

- Identify 3 Internal Outcome Measures for your program
- Identify 3 External Outcome Measures for your program

Creating new assessment approaches/instruments

- Common assignments
- Portfolio creation/analysis
- Grant funding/publication tracking
- Simulated clients
- Articles/professional presentations
Choosing points of assessment for GOC in your curriculum

- Fall, Spring, Summer
- Orientation, Mid Year, End of Year
- End of Rotations

Creating a Master Plan

- Plan Your Assessment Points
- Use Grid

Using Data to Improve Your Program

- Why?
- When?
- How?

Conclusions

- Questions?
Competency Evaluation: The Harbor-UCLA Experience

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David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA

Background
- Previous methods of trainee evaluation
- Decision to move toward competency-based evaluations
- ADPTC/CCTC draft document
- Adaptation of document to evaluation form format
- Decision to use same competencies for fellows as practicum students with higher expected competencies

Practicum Competencies Outline
- Association of Directors of Psychology Training Clinics (ADPTC) Practicum Competencies Workgroup (February 27, 2004)
- Council of Chairs of Training Councils (CCTC) Practicum Competencies Workgroup (March 25, 2004)
- Final CCTC comments, November, 2004
- Summarized by Hatcher & Lassiter (2006)

Practicum Competencies Outline
- Levels of Competence
  - Novice
  - Intermediate
  - Advanced
  - Proficient
  - Expert
Practicum Competencies Outline

• Areas of Competence
  - Relationship/Interpersonal Skills
    • With Patients/ Clients/ Families
    • With Colleagues
    • With Supervisors
    • With Support Staff
    • With Teams at Clinic
    • With Community Professionals
    • For the Practicum Site Itself

• Skills in Application of Research
• Intervention Skills
• Psychological Assessment Skills
• Consultation Skills/ Interdisciplinary
• Collaborations
• Diversity (Individual & Cultural Differences)

Practicum Competencies Outline

• Areas of Competence
  - Ethics
  - Professional Development
  - Practical Skills to Maintain Effective Clinical Practice
  - Professional Development Competencies
  - Metaknowledge/ Metacompetencies
  - Development of Leadership Skills
  - Supervisory Skills

Harbor-UCLA Assessment

• Psychological assessment skills

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<th>Description of Skills</th>
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<td>Ability to select and implement multiple methods and means of evaluation in ways that are responsive to and respectful of diverse individuals, couples, families, and groups</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ability to utilize systematic approaches to gathering data to inform clinical decision making</td>
<td>E P</td>
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<tr>
<td>Knowledge of psychometric issues, and basis of assessment methods</td>
<td>A P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of issues related to integration of different data sources</td>
<td>A P</td>
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... And this is the last time you’ll see reference to externs or practicum students!
Harbor-UCLA Assessment

1. Ability to select and implement multiple methods and means of evaluation in ways that are responsive to and respectful of diverse individual, couple, family and group.

2. Ability to utilize systematic approaches to gathering data to inform clinical decision making.


4. Knowledge of issues related to integration of different data sources.

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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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N/A Outstanding Strong Satisfactory Needs Improvement Unsatisfactory Competency Level

Warning!
Attempts at complete review of the following slides may result in serious information overload!

Internal Consistency

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Skills in Application of Research

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<td>Psychological Assessment Skills</td>
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<td>Consultation Skills/Interdisciplinary Collaborations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Supervisory Skills</td>
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</table>
Inter-Scale Correlations

- Fellows' Inter-Scale Correlations Ranged From .39 (Relationship Skills with Support Staff - Leadership Skills) to -.93 (Assessment Skills - Consultation Skills)

Pre – Post Comparisons

Discussion

- Preliminary data suggest that competencies can be measured reliably
- Inter-scale correlations raise important questions concerning competency constructs
  - Are the identified competencies really distinct?
  - Is there a core competency that underlies all identified competencies (cf. analytic strategy in MMPI-2 RF)
Discussion

• Future Directions
  - Need for additional data to inform competency evaluation process
  - More controlled study of competency scales (e.g., mid-term and final ratings)
  - Factor-analytic approaches may address questions of inter-scale shared variance
  - Need for validation strategies
  - Development of evaluation strategies for advanced speciality competencies