

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&P.

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- 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?

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)

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)

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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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

Practicum Competencies Outline

- Areas of Competence
 - 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

	Extern	Fellow
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	I	P
Ability to utilize systematic approaches to gathering data to inform clinical decision making	I	P
Knowledge of psychometric issues and bases of assessment methods	A	P
Knowledge of issues related to integration of different data sources	A	P

... And this is the last time you'll see reference to externs or practicum students!

Harbor-UCLA Assessment

	Component Level	Unsatisfactory	Meets Expectations	Satisfactory	Strong	Outstanding	N/A
1. Ability to select and implement multiple methods and means of evaluation in ways that are responsive to and respectful of diverse individual, couples, families and groups.	P	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. Ability to utilize systematic approaches to gathering data to inform clinical decision making.	P	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. Knowledge of psychometric issues and bases of assessment methods.	P	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. Knowledge of issues related to integration of different data sources.	P	1	2	3	4	5	6

Warning !

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

Internal Consistency

	Items	N	α
Relationship/Interpersonal Skills			
With Patients/Clients/Families	4	90	.938
With Colleagues	3	85	.923
With Supervisors	6	92	.958
With Support Staff	N/A	N/A	N/A
With Teams at Clinic	2	77	.907
With Community Professionals	N/A	N/A	N/A
For the Practicum Site Itself	3	74	.935

Internal Consistency

	Items	N	Fellows α
Skills in Application of Research	2	87	.910
Intervention Skills	8	70	.954
Psychological Assessment Skills	7	55	.960
Consultation Skills/Interdisciplinary Collaborations	7	60	.961
Diversity (Individual and Cultural Differences)	3	91	.955
Ethics	6	86	.972
Professional Development			
Practical Skills to Maintain Effective Clinical Practice	6	75	.938
Professional Development Competencies	11	73	.964
Metaknowledge/Metacompetencies			
Development of Leadership Skills	5	91	.914
Supervisory Skills	8	24	.966
	5	56	.901

Inter-Scale Correlations

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

Pre – Post Comparisons

Fellows

	Evaluation Period						t	p
	1			2				
	N	M	S.D.	N	M	S.D.		
Relationship/Interpersonal Skills								
With Patients/Clients/Families	42	4.37	.723	48	4.71	.438	2.77	.007
With Colleagues	40	4.33	.693	45	4.74	.471	3.26	.002
With Supervisors	44	4.39	.698	48	4.69	.511	2.34	.02
With Support Staff	42	4.52	.707	44	4.82	.390	2.41	.018
With Teams at Clinic	38	4.41	.761	39	4.68	.493	1.86	.066
With Community Professionals	35	4.14	.879	41	4.76	.435	3.94	.000
For the Practicum Site Itself	38	4.32	.803	36	4.75	.439	2.80	.006

Pre – Post Comparisons

Fellows

	Evaluation Period						t	p
	1			2				
	N	M	S.D.	N	M	S.D.		
Skills in Application of Research	41	4.13	.775	46	4.46	.566	2.23	.028
Intervention Skills	32	4.20	.687	38	4.70	.431	3.72	.000
Psychological Assessment Skills	25	4.10	.803	30	4.50	.474	2.31	.025
Consultation Skills/Interdisciplinary Collaborations	32	4.18	.798	34	4.64	.411	2.93	.005
Diversity (Individual and Cultural Differences)	44	4.32	.753	47	4.65	.463	2.51	.014
Ethics	40	4.33	.727	46	4.68	.479	2.68	.009
Professional Development								
Practical Skills to Maintain Effective Clinical Practice	32	4.08	.754	43	4.59	.574	3.33	.001
Professional Development Competencies	30	4.23	.691	43	4.69	.421	3.55	.001
Metaknowledge/Metacompetencies	46	4.33	.656	45	4.62	.476	2.37	.020
Development of Leadership Skills	13	3.65	.545	11	4.32	.560	2.94	.008
Supervisory Skills	28	3.92	.602	28	4.41	.420	3.50	.001

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

