

Child and Adolescent Development Students' Understanding Of Ethical and Legal Issues

Child and Adolescent Development BS – College of Health and Human Development

Step 1: Student Learning Outcome

Students can identify relevant ethical principles and legal issues and the impact of possible actions in real-world situations.

Step 2: Methods & Measures

All Advanced Practicum faculty (CAS 474, CAS 464, CAS 494) administer a common department wide assignment testing students' understanding of the application of theory to practice, research to practice, ethical principles and legal issues. The assignment was created by the Advanced Practicum instructors and evaluated and edited by all full time faculty members at an assessment faculty meeting. It was piloted in the fall of 2014 and changes were made to the measure to enhance clarity and accuracy of the results. It was then administered at the end of the spring semester 2015 for the final assessment.

Direct Measure: Common Department Assignment

The Assignment includes short essays and multiple choice questions on Ethical Principles and Legal Issues. The assignment is rated on a three category rating system (i.e., does not meet competency, meets competency or exceeds competency), based on a common global rubric.

For the section on Ethical Principles, students are asked to identify two of the principles listed on the exam and explain each principle. They are then to discuss the relationship between the principle and their actions as a child development professional. For the Legal Issues section of the assignment, students are to identify one national, state, or local law that professionals at their practicum site (or other child development professionals) must be aware of. They are then to answer in a short essay how professionals should act in accordance with this law.

The section on Legal Issues involves an eleven question multiple choice questions that assesses students' knowledge of child abuse reporting requirements.

Indirect Measure: Self-Assessment in Senior Seminar

Students in CAS 490T, Senior Seminar, took a self-assessment survey on which they rated their knowledge of 19 areas and their abilities in 21 areas of child and adolescent development. Students were asked to rate their current knowledge as, Minimal, Slight, Average, Good and Excellent. Four questions in the self-assessment align to the learning outcome as follows;

- Laws and policies articulated for professionals working with children and families in the state of California
- General ethical principles professionals working with children and families are expected to follow
- Signs of child abuse
- Responsibilities associated with reporting reasonable suspicion of child abuse

Step 3: Criteria for Success

Direct Measure: Seventy percent (70%) of the students will meet or exceed competency on short essay questions as rated by faculty coding pairs on a global rubric. Seventy percent of the students will score 70% on the multiple choice section.

Indirect Measure: Seventy percent (70%) of the students will rate their knowledge of laws and policies, general ethical principles, signs of child abuse and responsibilities associated with reporting reasonable suspicion of child abuse as good or excellent.

Step 4: Results

Direct Measure: Results for the Ethical Principles short essay section of the assignment indicated that 79% of students met or exceeded competency. Results for Legal Issues short essay section indicated that 73% of students met or exceeded competency. These results exceeded the program's criteria for success. On the multiple choice portion of the assessment, results using the entire sample (N = 221), indicated that 74% of the students scored 70% or above which met the program's criteria for success.

All Advanced Practicum faculty (CAS 474, CAS 464, and CAS 494) administered the common department wide assignment at the end of the spring 2015 semester. Course instructors assigned points for the assignment. The Assessment Committee selected a 20% random sample from each class, resulting in a sample comprising 48 students. Coders on the assessment team scored the answers in terms of a three category rating system (i.e., does not meet competency, meets competency or exceeds competency) based on a common global rubric. All responses were independently coded by two coders.

For reliability we used percent-agreement, followed up by consensus coding in cases of disagreement. The percentage of agreement on independent coding was Ethical Principles 86% and Legal Issues 77%. The final rating was determined through consensus.

Indirect Measure: On the self- assessment survey, 66% of the students rated their knowledge of laws and policies as good or excellent which did not meet the program's criteria for success (70%).

Eighty six percent (86%) rated their knowledge of general ethical principles professionals working with children and families are expected to follow as good or excellent and ninety-nine percent (99%) of the students rated their knowledge of signs of child abuse and reporting responsibilities for child abuse suspicion at good or excellent, both of which met the program's criteria for success (70%).

Step 5: Improvement Actions

Assessment results were shared with all stakeholders, and discussed and distributed at the program's faculty retreat in August 2015 with full and part-time instructors.

When the program previously assessed for this SLO in 2008/2009 and determined that students had difficulty identifying and applying ethical principles and legal issues to their work as professionals in child development. In response, the following "Closing the Loop" plan in CAS Advanced Practicum course was instituted.

- Incorporate/modify course preamble to provide content specification (primary theoretical perspectives considered, ethical principles, legal issues analyzed/applied) (CAS 464, 474, and 494).
- Revise course learning goals to more clearly highlight ethical and legal issues (CAS 474).
- Recommend all advanced practicum syllabi starting in S11 incorporate the relevant preamble (indicated below).

As re-assessed in F14/S15, the program met their criteria for success for this SLO and will continue to emphasize ethical principles and legal issues and maintain the changes that were instituted after the 2008/2009 assessment for this SLO.