

Faculty/Student Affairs Collaboration Through Art-based Community Service

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Community service projects are among the best opportunities on campus for a collaborative effort among student affairs professionals, faculty, and students. Add to that a chance to work with one or more local agencies, and a volunteer program can be an ideal bridge-builder on campus and in the surrounding community (Cotton & Stanton, 1990). Such collaboration was the foundation of a successful community service program in a small college town. Art Club for Kids was a program developed as a joint effort between a small, private, liberal arts college and an elementary school in need of assistance with its art program.

The Program

An effective community service program requires a great deal of thought and planning. Adherence to the Principles of Good Practice for Service-Learning developed in 1987 by the National Society for Internships and Experiential Education can be especially helpful in developing a new program. These principles state that an effective and sustained program:

1. Engages people in responsible and challenging actions for the common good;
2. Provides structured opportunities for people to reflect critically on their service experience;
3. Articulates clear service and learning goals for everyone involved;
4. Allows for those with needs to define those needs;

5. Clarifies the responsibilities of each person and organization involved;
6. Matches service providers and service needs through a process that recognizes changing circumstances;
7. Expects genuine, active, and sustained organizational commitment;
8. Includes training, supervision, monitoring, support, recognition, and evaluation to meet service and learning goals;
9. Insures that the time commitment for service and learning is flexible, appropriate, and in the best interest of all involved;
10. Is committed to program participation by and with diverse populations. (Kendall & Associates, 1990, p. 40)

Attending to these principles helped to assure the successful launching of Art Club for Kids. The request for an art-based service program was made to the director of campus programs at the college by an elementary school social worker. The need was obvious: budget cuts had eliminated much of the art program the elementary school had once offered. Children had limited outlets for their artistic abilities, and personnel at the school felt that a great deal of potential ability was being wasted. As required by the Principles of Good Practice, "those with needs" had determined the extent of the needs, and had proposed a possible solution.

College Involvement

The director of campus programs then approached a faculty member from the Department of Visual Arts, and together they created a student-coordinated art program. Approximately \$1000 in funding was provided through a grant from the statewide Campus Compact's venture grant program, and supplemented by the college's student volunteer organization.

Ten college student volunteers were recruited from among art students and the general student body with an emphasis placed on those students interested in pursuing education or art therapy as professions. This group began meeting regularly to plan the program's implementation. They chose a coordinator, researched age-appropriate projects, prepared supply lists, and planned each session. They also received training in working with the population and were encouraged to articulate a subset of their own goals that reflected the overarching goal of the program: to provide opportunities for children to engage in art activities. Faculty involvement increased as other Visual Arts faculty helped identify suppliers and suggested possible projects based on their own teaching experience.

Public School Involvement

At the elementary school, the social worker who had made the original contact recruited children to participate. Initially, the planners anticipated that approximately 25 children would be interested enough to give up their lunch periods to participate. However, three times that number signed up in the first week, and even that number increased as the year progressed. It appeared that the reputation of the program (as well as the very visible projects the children created) led to a constant increase in interest among children in the school.

Such an unexpected response required a reconfiguration of the program. Projects were replanned to accommodate larger numbers of participants. For example, a plan to take the children to a hands-on children's museum was abandoned because of cost. Instead, money was redirected to purchase additional supplies so that no child would be turned away. These "changing circumstances," as referred to in the Principles, required a high level of flexibility among all participants.

The enthusiasm expressed by the children was attributed in part to several key decisions made by the program planners:

1. There was no cost at all to the children;
2. It was not an after-school program, which would have necessitated special trans-

portation, an impossibility for some children;

3. The program was altered to be age-specific, with children grouped by grades, which allowed for integration of art projects into other class activities, as well as more age-appropriate projects.

Results

According to the observations of teachers at the elementary school and the student volunteers, the program produced the expected results (an increased enthusiasm for art among the children, clarification of professional goals for volunteers), as well as some positive unexpected results. Among these were the development of a reciprocal learning relationship between classroom teachers and volunteers, each of whom provided the other with insights about the children and their work, as well as positive regard among parents who appreciated the extra attention their children received, especially related to the encouragement of their artistic talents. This sort of "interconnectedness" among the various groups involved in the service is one of its most profound outcomes (Billingsley, 1994, p. 24).

The faculty/student affairs staff collaboration also produced positive results. The relationship served as a collegial model to which student volunteers responded positively. They quickly learned the division of "advising" responsibilities, seeking out the Visual Arts faculty member for ideas and assistance with the purchase of supplies and the planning of projects, and asking the campus programs director questions about contractual obligations and reallocation of resources. Additionally, other faculty members whose assistance was sought had a chance to see a positive extracurricular program that had, at its core, an educational focus.

Opportunity for reflection, a critical component of successful programs, was provided during planning meetings, during which volunteers discussed their observations of the children.

Summary

Art Club for Kids has succeeded in providing

opportunities for many positive things to happen. Children at a financially struggling elementary school have had a chance to create art. Volunteers have been able to learn more about a possible profession. Relations between the college and the elementary school, its teachers, students, and parents, have improved. Lastly, a collaborative relationship between faculty and student affairs staff was developed and will likely continue with the growth of the program.

In addition, benefits to both campus and community abound. Any opportunity that allows college students to learn experientially is ultimately a sound educational practice (Howard, 1993). As the first Principle of Good Practice tells us, an effective program engages students in responsible and challenging actions for the common good. Combined with an academic facet, such activity is invaluable.

The future of Art Club for Kids is secure: funding needs have been significantly reduced by using household items for many of the projects and by depending on the college's student volunteer organization for approximately \$200 per year for other supply purchases. Other plans include an assessment of the program's impact on the professional goals of the volunteers and the interest level in art of the participants.

As a grant-sponsored program, Art Club for Kids has also received attention statewide, including a presentation at a state conference on service learning. The presentation was led by the student coordinator of the program, assisted by the faculty advisor and the campus programs director. The consensus at this presentation, and in other discussions, is that Art Club for Kids is a model that can be easily replicated at other campuses. The structure and minimal costs of Art Club for Kids make it an ideal candidate for replication on other campuses. Volunteers are relatively easy to recruit for at least two reasons: they enjoy doing art; and because art is something that has been important in their lives, they are motivated by the harsh truth of budget cuts which have eliminated a potentially wonderful experience for other children. Costs are limited because many of the projects can be accomplished using household items. This particular group used bottles, scrap materials, objects found

in the school's supply closets, and other inexpensive or free items for their projects. The school was also able to provide paints, markers, paper, and some other inexpensive items.

The scheduling of activities, easily replicable at other campuses, also led to increased volunteer interest. The lunch hour is ideal because classroom space is readily available. After-school time would work as well for an elementary school whose students all live within walking distance. Limiting volunteers' commitment to one hour a week of actual volunteer time, plus approximately two hours a month of planning time, made Art Club for Kids the kind of service project that fits into a busy student's schedule.

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The Resident Assistant Internship: Integrating Student Staff Training and Selection

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Boyer (1987) advised that institutions provide "intensive workshops" and training for student staff to prepare them to meet the variety of problems they will confront in residence halls (p. 200). Colleges and universities meet this need in a variety of ways. Pre-opening training combined with regular on-going or "in-service" training throughout the academic year is a common model. Often "in-service" training is

presented in a course format taught by master's level professional staff, and awarded academic credit. Many institutions face challenges which hinder this model. These challenges include small professional staffs who may or may not all have master's degrees; low funding; small applicant pools; and negative conceptions of the resident assistant (RA) position from the student body.

In order to meet these challenges, meet our students' developmental needs, and provide effective skills training for new and current student staff, this institution developed and implemented an integrated RA staff training/selection model. This model, called the "RA Internship," involves four weeks of training and "on the job" experience prior to interviews and selection.

The RA Internship model is a multi-level experience, calling for involvement by applicants, current RAs and professional staff. Participants are guided in the internship by a current RA "mentor" and a residence hall director. The Internship provides appropriate developmental supports and challenges for both applicants and current staff. Skills training allows applicants to deal with issues of competency as an RA. The interactive, "on the job" experience with a mentor improves the ability to manage emotions and work autonomously (Chickering & Reisser, 1993). For current RAs, the experience of being a mentor enhances role-taking skills, a significant factor in psychological development (Sprinthall, Reiman & Thies-Sprinthall, 1993). The active involvement in the internship process by the current staff also addresses the common problem of boredom with in-service training (Blimling, 1989).

The model is started early in the spring semester. Prior planning includes identification and orientation of current RA staff as mentors, choice of training topics, and selection of meeting sites. The orientation meeting for current staff includes discussion of the model, their role as a mentor, and expectations for participation. An initial interest meeting is advertised in the campus newspaper, on bulletin boards and electronic message boards; all students are welcome. At this meeting the model is outlined; interns are assigned a mentor; and responsibilities

and expectations of interns are reinforced. Finally, the interns are instructed about the confidential nature of issues they may observe, and a statement on confidentiality is signed.

During the next four weeks, interns attend weekly staff meetings in their residence hall, and internship training sessions. The training sessions include an opening icebreaker, a discussion of the past week's experiences, and a presentation on a topic such as program planning, listening skills, and confrontation skills. The final session involves discussing various roleplays acted out by current staff in residence hall rooms. The roleplays focus on a specific issue such as a roommate conflict, or confronting a policy violation. Interns are required to accompany their mentor and residence hall director on duty rounds, and to cooperate with their mentor in planning a residence hall program. Professional staff provide close supervision and support for mentors and interns. After completion of the internship, all interns who are still interested in being an RA continue through an interview selection process. Training for those selected is continued with a short pre-fall opening refresher, and monthly in-service sessions.

The overall internship, and the relationship between the intern, mentor and residence hall director are evaluated by the intern on a four-point scale (1 = *poor*, 4 = *excellent*) after the internship is completed. The average overall evaluation for the past two years ($n = 30$) for the Internship model is 3.67 ($SD = .56$). The mentor/intern relationship is rated 3.54 ($SD = .72$), and the residence hall director/intern relationship is rated 3.71 ($SD = .55$). The evaluations indicate that the model has been perceived favorably by participants. In addition, there are written comments by participants on how the internship helps develop a fuller understanding and respect for resident assistants and the Residence Life program.

Participants receive valuable training in communication and planning skills useful in other aspects of their college careers. The RA staff reports that they have increased the level of communication with residents, and have more allies in their respective buildings. The professional staff has the opportunity to observe and

assess each candidate's strengths and weaknesses over a four-week period.

The RA Internship model has been successful on this campus. The model provides significant benefits for both participants and the Residence Life staff. The model, though time intensive, requires no extra funding and is not burdensome for a small professional staff. These notable advantages make the model ideal for small campuses. The concept, nevertheless, is easily adaptable to Residence Life programs facing similar staffing and training challenges at larger institutions. With continuing assessment and evaluation, the professional staff on this campus believes the model can only improve.

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Parents as Referral Agents for their First Year College Students: A Retention Intervention

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During orientation summer programs, new college students are typically introduced to the many support services available on campus. Too often, however, this type of information is not retained because of the sheer number of facts included, and because these services are not yet perceived as relevant.

Parents have been acknowledged by college students as being strong retention influences (Harmon & Rhatigan, 1990; Hunt, Schmidt, Hunt, Boyd, & Magoon, 1994; Jacoby, 1983). It is unlikely, however, that parents are aware of the wide array of problems experienced by new

students nor of the many specific campus resources available to address these problems. Parents who are informed about campus resources can serve an important retention function by acting as referral agents if and when their children get into difficulty, and can do so before their problems become too overwhelming.

The Counseling Center at a large public research university with a commuter population of approximately 75%, maintains and updates annually a campus *Resource Directory*, the contents of which are organized around 23 common barriers to academic success (Warman, 1983). Examples include difficulty with managing time, difficulty with test-taking, and lack of motivation. For each barrier, the *Resource Directory* lists and briefly describes campus resources representing the University's many agencies that students can use to correct the problem. Each entry gives a description of the resource, its location and, when relevant, a phone number for arranging an appointment or to obtain further information. Because students respond differently to various resource aids, the *Resource Directory* describes a variety of approaches (e.g., individual sessions, groups or workshops, self-help programs, audio and video tapes, and written material).

During two sessions of the 1993 Summer Orientation Parent Transition Program for parents of incoming first-year students, the need for and uses of the *Resource Directory* were described to parents. Parents were reminded of the important distinction between doing things for their students and helping their students do things for themselves. Parents attending these two sessions were asked to demonstrate their interest in participating in the academic success of their student by writing their name, address and the name of their student on a file card. They were told that in the fall they would receive an updated copy of the *Resource Directory* so that they could help their student identify and locate appropriate support services. One hundred fifty sets of parents agreed to participate in the project. Ninety sets of parents attending two other orientation sessions, where there was no exposure to the project, served as a nontreatment comparison group.

Fifty-seven percent of the parent sets who agreed to serve as referral agents for their student returned a follow-up survey sent to them around the time first semester grades were posted. Of those, only 12% reported that they had not looked at the *Resource Directory*. Forty-three percent reported they used the directory to make recommendations to their student.

Two outcome variables were studied to determine the effect of the intervention on students' retention rates:

- (a) *academic persistence*, defined as being enrolled for a given semester;
- (b) *academic persistence in good standing*, defined as being enrolled for a given semester and ending that semester with no negative academic action, such as probation, warning, or dismissal.

There were no statistically significant differences between the treatment and comparison groups on rates of academic persistence for either fall or spring semester. Persistence rates for fall semester for the treatment and comparison groups respectively were 95% and 92%; for spring semester they were 89% and 84%. There were, however, statistically significant differences between the treatment and comparison groups on rates of persistence *in good academic standing*. In both the fall and spring semesters, greater proportions of the treatment group than of the comparison group persisted in good academic standing (79% vs 63% in the fall, $\chi^2(1, N = 240) = 7.36, p < .01$.; and 73% vs 60% in the spring, $\chi^2(1, N = 240) = 4.14, p < .05$).

Fostering help-seeking among new college students who are also dealing with independence-dependence issues is not easy. It appears that encouraging and equipping parents of incoming college students not only to take an active interest in their children's undergraduate experience but also to be able to act as informed referral agents for them has a demonstrably positive effect on their children's academic performance during the first year of college.

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Decreasing Transfer Student Hassles: Collaborative Research and Action

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Transfer students may experience particular discomfort when migrating from one institution to another. Because the movement from two to four-year institutions increasingly serves as a pipeline for students from underrepresented racial and socio-economic groups (Carter & Wilson, 1994), decreasing the negative stress of the transfer process may support campus diversity. This collaborative research blended the skills of a student affairs researcher, administrators, students, and faculty. The result was a decrease in the hassles experienced by transfer students in the social sciences college of a large, Mid-Atlantic state-supported university.

Stress Research

Stress research has moved from a focus on critical life events (Holmes & Rahe, 1967) to a focus on hassles (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984), "familiar daily stresses . . . often taken for granted because they seem relatively unimportant compared with major life events" (p. 311). Since hassles may reflect stress sources more so than major life events (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984), the Brief College Student Hassles Scale (Blankstein, Flett, & Koledin, 1991) was used as a model for the development of a locally relevant instrument.

Instrument Development

A small group of students was convened by the college academic dean to act in a research-advisory capacity. In collaboration with the researcher, the students articulated categories of hassles. The researcher defined the item format (Likert scale) and the number of items necessary within each category. Because the dean's interest was in making student record-keeping functions more efficient and user-friendly, students generated the items by operationalizing each category to include specific tasks which might be administratively difficult for other students within the college.

This collaborative approach resulted in 31 Likert scale items, reviewed and corrected for student conversational terminology by the advisory group. The categories of hassles were: (a) college advising, (b) registration, (c) finance, and (d) department advising. A final open-ended question asked students to identify an area that needed improvement.

Survey Recipients

Within the college under study, the majors with the highest enrollments were criminal justice and government/politics. Students in these majors were therefore selected for study. Juniors were selected because their reported hassles might be corrected before their senior year. Students who entered the university as freshmen were included in the research so that their responses could be compared with responses from students who entered as transfers. This enabled the college to better understand the unique advising needs of transfer students.

Surveys were mailed to 584 students. Mail and telephone follow-up resulted in a 58% response rate ($N = 347$). Respondents were almost equally divided by gender with men comprising 49% ($n = 170$) of the sample. Students who entered as freshmen and those who entered as transfers were also almost equally represented with freshman entrants comprising 49% ($n = 170$) of the sample. The majority of respondents were White (72%, $n = 249$) with African Americans (11%, $n = 38$), Asian Americans (6%, $n = 20$), and Hispanic students (4%, $n = 13$) among the top four racial/ethnic groups

to which respondents belonged.

Data Analysis

The academic dean was advised of quantitative and qualitative survey results. The student advisory group received only quantitative results. The academic dean received the full text of the qualitative responses which frequently named the individuals from whom students experienced difficulty.

These student responses to the open-ended question were transcribed verbatim, removing anything that would individually identify the student, and shared with the dean. Thus, broad thematic areas for intervention were identified for the advisory group and specific instances for the dean.

The instrument was evaluated for its reliability. Cronbach alpha reliabilities for the four categories of hassles named above ranged from .58 to .87.

Responses of transfer and nontransfer students were compared using *t*-tests to determine if transfer students experienced significantly greater distress. Results showed that transfer students ($M = 26.48$, $SD = 14.00$) were more troubled by advising difficulties than were freshman entrants ($M = 24.08$, $SD = 10.26$), $t(314.03) = -1.81$, $p = .04$. No differences appeared between the two student groups in the three remaining categories of hassles.

From Research to Action

Based on both quantitative and qualitative results, the academic dean, student advisory group, and college advising staff determined that transfer students were dissatisfied with departmental academic advising. Specifically, students were dissatisfied with the low speed and frequent inaccuracy of transfer course credit evaluations. A centralized university-wide transfer course evaluation office was recommended.

Within the year, such an office was established. Using computer technology, 80% of the transfer courses are now evaluated prior to registration. Informal student comments indicate high transfer student satisfaction with this newly implemented system.

The academic unit redesigned the transfer

orientations. The college advisors trained the departmental advisors on how to effectively use computerized course selection and scheduling programs. The reduction in time spent in course selection and scheduling allowed departmental advisors to spend more time in going over the major requirements and addressing transfer students' concerns and questions.

A video was developed by this academic unit, which gave transfer students both auditory and visual information regarding the general education requirements of the university. The video also described how transfer courses were evaluated for their appropriateness in fulfilling the general education requirements of the university.

All transfer students were invited to attend an all-day college-wide transfer Open House. Representatives from the Career Development Center, Learning Assistance Center, Math specialists, college transfer course evaluator and departmental and college advisors were all present. Transfer students met individually with the above representatives to discuss their concerns and issues. Informal student reaction to this Open House was very positive.

Under development is an upper-level one credit course for transfer students. This course will focus on the adjustments of transfer students when they migrate from one institution to another.

Additional research could determine if these intervention strategies have resulted not only in increased satisfaction but also in increased transfer student retention. The improved retention of transfer students could make an important contribution to the retention of members of underrepresented racial and socioeconomic groups, strengthening campus diversity.

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Requests for Student Counseling Records for Employment and Security Clearances: Suggested Guidelines

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College counselors receive frequent requests from administrators, faculty, and other university-related personnel to disclose confidential information about students (Grayson & Cauley, 1989; Malley, Gallagher, & Brown, 1992; Sharkin, 1995). In addition to pressure to reveal confidential information that comes from within the confines of the academic setting, college counselors also get such requests from outside the university. A particularly troublesome situation arises when counseling center records are requested by investigators from government agencies (e.g., FBI, DOD, etc.) conducting background checks or security clearances on students being screened for employment. Aspects of this topic recently generated enough interest to prompt an "internet" discussion among counseling center directors, who recognized the relevance of this topic as a current issue and identified the practical aspects of dealing with this issue.

In a typical situation, an investigator arrives on campus, sometimes without forewarning, presuming to have access to a student's records based on the fact that the student has signed a standard agency consent form. Based on considerable dialogue between counseling center practitioners around the country, there is no consensus on how this situation is handled. In some centers, counseling records may be made available to the investigator while other centers may refuse to release records as a matter of policy. Because it is presumably difficult to develop a sound policy or explore one's philosophy on this matter with an official government agent sitting in the office, some benefit might

come from exploring this issue prior to these encounters.

Response Determinants

Counselors may readily offer information to investigators in large part due to the fact that a former client's consent has been obtained by the investigator. In such instances, some counselors may assume that the withholding of counseling records (when written consent has obviously been given by the student) may hurt the student's chances for obtaining employment. In this situation, by providing a report, the counselor may be implicitly recommending the student for the job. Others may be concerned that the refusal to release information would be construed as withholding potentially damaging information about the student. In making sure this does not occur, counselors may tend to select positive material from the file, leading the investigator to believe that there is nothing negative in the record, and the student is therefore suitable for the job.

Other counselors, however, may feel strongly that the release of any information (other than confirmation of the student's attendance in counseling) represents a misuse of counseling records by individuals not qualified to properly assess the information. Counselors have expressed concern that these so-called investigators do not necessarily have a clear sense of what they are looking for but instead may simply be on a "fishing expedition." There also may be concern that specific information (e.g., treatment for depression, sexuality issues) will be distorted or used inappropriately by investigators to suit their own purposes. Moreover, the consent given by the student may be perceived as coerced; that is, students actually may not feel free to refuse signing the consent form because they do not want to appear to be uncooperative or otherwise harm their chances of getting hired.

Unfortunately, guidelines provided by the Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct (American Psychological Association [APA], 1992) and the ethical standards of the American College Personnel Association (ACPA, 1990) do not necessarily address the unique challenges posed by requests for confidential

information for hiring purposes and security clearances. While the guidelines are clear that records cannot be released without signed consent, there is no standard that states that information must be released when appropriate consent has been obtained. In their record-keeping guidelines, APA (1993) cautions psychologists about the adverse effects of outdated records, which may be applicable when requests for counseling records are made several years following the student's graduation or departure from the school.

Issues for Consideration

Because professional organizations have not provided specific help on this issue, the following thoughts may help guide counselors' efforts at thinking through the matter of releasing information. First and foremost, counselors might do well to remind themselves of the purpose of having, in a society, the opportunity for a counseling relationship. We assert that counseling is in part beneficial because it offers an intentional relationship setting where issues of all kind can be discussed without judgment and retribution. Because of this, clients are free to choose any topic as legitimate for exploration. Because this is the framework offered by the counselor, for the work that will follow the initial meeting, it may well behoove the counselor to remain true to this agreement when the work is complete. The counselor can do so by refusing to change the rules when someone later makes inquiries of the work, especially when the counselor has reason to believe that the content may be evaluated and judged. Protecting confidentiality is not the responsibility of the prospective employer, or even the client, but rather that of the counselor, who philosophically understands both the immediate and long term value of consistently protecting the therapy domain.

The second issue is related to role identity. In other words, are counselors going beyond their role responsibilities by releasing this kind of information in the first place? Most counselors feel comfortable providing information to other counselors ready to assume treatment responsibility of a client. In part, this is because

counselors typically identify themselves as working in the therapeutic domain and thus offer aid to another counselor from within their area of expertise. Presumably, most would admit that they are working outside their area of expertise if called upon to help in the process of job screening. This would be especially true if the counselor did not know the requirements of the job to which the person was applying and had not specifically evaluated the client within that context.

Another issue deals with intent. In providing information regarding a client's diagnosis and treatment utilization, the counselor may unwittingly be engaging in the process of employment screening with the investigator. If this occurs, the burden of proof lies with the counselor to show that counseling theory and practice have evolved to the point where high correlations exist between work status and particular psychological indicators. If such does not exist, and in recognition of this limitation, the counselor may want to reassess his/her assumptions about the benefits (and liabilities) of sharing such information.

The final issue involves the using of encounters with these investigators as opportunities to educate them about the potential misuse of counseling records for employment screening. The counselor can explain the professional's reliance on research to answer questions, pointing out that researchers have not yet reported a strong relationship between traditional counseling and the ability to make predictions regarding government employment.

Further, this relationship most likely becomes weaker the greater the time between termination of counseling and an investigator's inquiry. Finally, the counselor can explain the importance of recognizing the professional's limitations and the need to remain within the counselor's area of expertise.

Suggested Guidelines

Based on these reflections and in order to provide some assistance on this issue, we are presenting the following suggested guidelines for counseling center practitioners. First, we recommend that a written policy be established regarding these

types of requests. This should include a clear statement about what will or will not be released. To preserve the practice of protecting counseling records from misuse, we believe that counseling centers should only agree to provide confirmation of the student having had contact with their service. It should be stated that this will be done only after written consent from the student has been obtained and verified. Such a policy statement can be written to cover any requests similar to the security clearances discussed here, including requests from state medical boards, bar examiners, and the like. Moreover, the policy should be consistent for all mental health agencies within a particular institution (e.g., if there is a Mental Health unit in addition to the University's Counseling Service).

Second, there should be a statement indicating that the policy relates to all requests of this nature and the student is not to be held responsible for the policy; thus, the withholding of information is not to be construed as implying anything about the student's appropriateness for employment. Third, the policy could include a statement that recommends the requesting agency contract with or employ its own mental health professionals to perform evaluations, if interested in the job applicant's psychological status.

With a clear, written policy statement established, counseling centers can handle these requests in a relatively routine manner. It is recommended, though, that a representative of one's counseling center meet with or talk with the investigator about the policy and try to avoid the appearance of being unsympathetic and overly rigid in response to requests for information. In addition, as noted earlier, this represents an opportunity to educate these investigators about limitations associated with using counseling records for employment or security clearances.

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Marketing An Educational Programming Workshop Series: An Effective Model and Plan

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The need for educational programming on university and college campuses to promote student wellness often puts programmers between a rock and a hard place. Schreier (1995) identified programmers as being faculty and staff in several areas including counseling centers, student health services, career and placement offices, international student services, residence life services, Greek and Panhellenic offices, services for students with disabilities, and so on. The rock and hard place is between needing to provide creative, innovative, and effective programs and getting target populations to attend (Trice, Desio, & Haire, 1989). As a solution to this unfortunate yet typical problem, the staff of the counseling center at Auburn University, developed a comprehensive marketing model and plan for packaging and promulgating an educational programming series. This marketing model and plan are readily applicable for any university or college programmer to more effectively market educational programming and thus increase attendance.

Marketing Model

The counseling center staff developed an interdisciplinary approach to psycho-educational

programming by adding basic marketing strategies to their usual clinical expertise (Gilchrist & Stringer, 1992). What developed was the *Thursdays @ Three Psycho-Educational Workshop Series* which was based on an idea developed at the University of Iowa Counseling Center. The Series provided one hour workshops once a week for 18 weeks on 18 different topics and was open to all students, staff, and faculty. The Series was developed on a model specifically aimed at increasing the program's marketability (Elam & Paley, 1992). These elements included: (a) wide breadth of topics; (b) topics with high salience to the typical presenting concerns of students to counseling centers (Carney, Peterson, & Moberg, 1990; Hoffman & Weiss, 1986); (c) central, highly accessible, and neutral location for the workshops; (d) relative anonymity for the participants by not collecting names nor asking participants why they were attending; (e) constancy and consistency in the offering of the workshops: same day of the week and same time of the day; (f) spontaneity and flexibility in attending by not requiring pre-registration; and (g) not charging an admission fee.

Marketing Plan

With the Series designed to be highly marketable, the next task was actually promulgating the Series. To do this, the staff at the counseling center developed a comprehensive marketing plan that included a *marketing mix* specific to the university/college community (Gilchrist & Stringer, 1992; Wittman, 1988). The marketing mix included a specific combination of advertising and information distribution contacts within major areas of the university (e.g., student affairs, academics affairs, and media) and among multifarious levels of campus life (e.g., students, staff, faculty, administration). The final component of the marketing mix was incorporating the elements of the marketing model into all publicity contacts. The specific actions and rationales of the marketing plan are as follows and are presented by broad headings so as to be readily applicable to any campus infrastructure:

Student Affairs

General Student Affairs Offices

• **(A)CTIONS**

- Co-sponsor individual Workshops with other student affairs offices.
- Mail weekly Workshop announcements to student affairs offices and personnel.
- Mail weekly announcements in-house.
- Encourage in-house referrals to Workshops.

• **(R)ATIONALES**

These actions coordinate the programming activities of various student affairs offices by fostering multi-office coalitions. These actions can also multiply marketing resources and give information on the Series directly to referral sources.

Residence Halls and Greek System

- **(A)** Conduct a day to preview Series for residence hall staff.
Distribute weekly Workshop announcements to residence hall staff.
Coordinate with Greek system to offer incentives to members for attending.
- **(R)** These actions create awareness and encourage staff to post and distribute weekly Series announcements as well as to generate invitations to do Workshops in the residence halls. These actions provide a connection with the Greek system in order to encourage members to attend.

Student Events

- **(A)** List Series information with student event office's promotional networks, e.g., events calendars, kiosks, bulletin boards, advertising windows, and so on.
Distribute weekly Workshop announcements to student organizations.
- **(R)** These actions create a greater campus wide awareness of the Series by accessing in-place student event networks and by targeting specific Workshops to specific groups, i.e., program on body image to women and athletic organizations.

Academic Affairs

- **(A)** Offer Series through continuing education/human resource development class listings.
Fax and campus mail weekly Workshop announcement to all academic personnel.
Mail Series information to departments for inclusion in department newsletters.
Coordinate with teaching faculty and staff to offer credit to students for attending Workshops.
- **(R)** These actions open the Series to a broader audience by creating connections with academia and by creating a venue for instructors to offer new and creative educational opportunities to students.

Media

- **(A)** List Workshops in all campus weekly/daily publications, i.e., ongoing events calendar.
Coordinate with campus publications to run feature stories on Series.
List Workshops on electronic billboards.
Conduct weekly e-mail distribution to all campus addresses.
Coordinate with campus radio/television stations to release weekly public service announcements.
Distribute announcements of upcoming Workshops to attendees at each Workshop.
- **(R)** These actions make use of in-place, free, and highly accessed advertising venues such as computer and electronic venues, printed media, and "word-of-mouth" promotion.

Conclusion

Using this marketing model and plan, specifically designed for educational programming within the university/college community, the counseling center had its highest attendance at any program in its history. The largest sources of referrals as listed on evaluations were: university publications, classroom extra-credit notices, event calendars, residence hall postings, and word-of-mouth. The counseling center also received high evaluative ratings for the workshops. Participants were asked to evaluate the quality of the workshops using a brief questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of one question about participants' overall satisfaction with the Series (rated on a five-point scale with 1 = *poor*, 2 = *fair*, 3 = *average*, 4 = *very good*, and 5 = *excellent*) and eight questions which addressed such issues as the degree to which the workshop was interesting, the degree to which the topic was relevant to the participant's college life, the degree to which the speaker's style kept the attendee's attention, and so on (rated on a 7-point Likert scale, with 1 = *not at all* and 7 = *completely*). Ninety percent of participants rated their overall satisfaction with the Series as being "excellent" to "very good" and 10% rated their overall satisfaction as being "fair" ($N = 407$). Responses to the other eight questions were also answered predominantly in the "excellent" to "very good" range ($M = 5.8$, $SD = 1.4$).

It is clear from the total attendance numbers and the high quality of the workshops as noted

by the evaluations, that the integrity of educational programming does not have to be compromised by a proactive and assertive marketing approach (Stadler, 1988). This marketing model and plan are offered as being readily usable by any university/college programmers who feel the demand to provide quality educational programming and who struggle with the need to increase attendance.

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