

Criminal Justice, Victim Services Management MS

Encourage Students to Critically Analyze and Apply Reading Material

Goal Description:

Students enrolled in CRIJ 6338 Coordinating Victim Services will become conversant in the academic literature on evidence-based best practices to better prepare them to address their clients’ needs. Students will be assigned chapters from *Rape Work*, a book detailing the history of rape crisis centers in the United States and the situational pressures and inter-agency conflicts undermining service provision. Students will supplement information from the text with findings from peer-reviewed publications to contextualize their impressions from the field on the exit exam.

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Students Will Be Able to Critically Review the Literature on Coordinated Community Response Teams and Synthesize Theories and Concepts from Prior Courses.

Learning Objective Description:

Online discussion prompts will promote dialogue about the material and its “real-world” application to students’ field experiences. Students will learn to think critically about the required readings and to seek out additional information in peer-reviewed journals. On a written exit exam, they will be able to synthesize empirical findings from the literature on coordinated community response teams.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Students Will Demonstrate a Mastery of the Literature on a Written Exam and in Virtual Posts

Indicator Description:

On a written, exit exam and in weekly discussion posts, students will demonstrate: 1. an understanding of the respective roles of victim service professionals and how stakeholders may coordinate their efforts to promote more optimal service delivery. 2. an appreciation for how victim service organizations unwittingly perpetuate re-victimization. 3. an understanding of specific barriers to interagency collaboration and practical solutions that are grounded in research.

Attached Files

[MSVSM Assessment Rubric](#)

Criterion Description:

Students will complete a comprehensive, written exam integrating student impressions from the field and the most up-to-date research in the area of victim services. Student performance will be evaluated in accordance with the attached rubric. This component of the exit exam corresponds with item #3: “Inclusion of appropriate and relevant prior research based on scholarly based theories and concepts.” Students will be assigned a score for this category ranging from 1 to 5. A score of “1” would be indicative of a “poor” work product while a “5” would suggest that the quality of the research was “excellent.” It is expected that at least 70% of students will achieve a minimum score of “4.”

Attached Files

[MSVSM Assessment Rubric Highlighting Item #4](#)

Findings Description:

Of the 26 students enrolled in the Capstone course during the spring term, all (or 100%) scored a “5” on this learning objective. All demonstrated an ability to: 1.) critically review the literature on coordinated community response teams; 2.) locate and successfully incorporate information from peer-reviewed journal articles; and 3.) integrate theories and concepts from prior courses. While all students performed well on this particular learning objective, some were deficient in other areas, mainly grammar. Recommendations for improvement include continued referrals to the Writing Center.

Attached Files

[MSVSM Assessment Results Table Highlighting Item #4](#)

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Capstone Research Synthesis Requirement Action Plan

Action Description:

In the next assessment cycle, the target for Item #3 on the Capstone rubric (inclusion of appropriate and relevant prior research based on scholarly theories and concepts) will increase by 10%, with an expectation that 80% of students will achieve a minimum score of “4” on this component of the exit exam.

Provide Students With Essential Knowledge and Skills for Effective Service Delivery

Goal Description:

Students enrolled in CRIJ 6638 Coordinating Victim Services will develop a practical, working knowledge of the victim services industry and skills for providing more optimal service delivery. Through a semester-long field experience students will better understand the realities of working for a victim services organization, including the “nuts and bolts” of the agency’s operations.

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Students Will Gain a Real-World Perspective Through Their Field Experience and Identify Case Management Resources in Their Communities
Learning Objective Description:

After completing nine hours of (paid or unpaid) field experience in a victim service agency, students will be able to identify both resources and service gaps. By immersing themselves in the field, students will acquire a greater understanding of their clients' needs.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

On an Exit Exam, Students Will Demonstrate a Practical Knowledge of the Victim Services Industry.
Indicator Description:

On a written, exit exam students will demonstrate an understanding of the inner workings of victim service organizations through the incorporation of agency assessments and a diagram. In addition to their host organization, students will select four victim service providers in their local community and interview agency representatives about their services. They will learn to: 1. examine the fundamental differences between “systems” and “community-based” service providers; and 2. identify common goals and objectives.

Attached Files

[!\[\]\(6059a5aa8b4ca7bb793408023d6c6e42_img.jpg\) CAPSTONE PROJECT RUBRIC](#)

Criterion Description:

Students will be required to incorporate the following information into their agency assessments: a. the agency type, mission, and purpose; b. the services it provides; c. funding sources; d. eligibility criteria; and e. community partners, if any. The diagram should reflect the agency’s relationships to key community partners. Student performance will be evaluated in accordance with the attached rubric. This component of the exit exam corresponds with item #4: “Incorporation of victim service organization data based on Capstone and ACE requirements.” Students will be assigned a score for this category ranging from 1 to 5. A score of “1” would be indicative of a “poor” work product while a “5” would suggest that the agency assessment was “excellent.” It is expected that, at least 70% of students in the class will achieve a minimum score of “4.”

Attached Files

[!\[\]\(e3275251d0893157c3584e20c81dc3ba_img.jpg\) MSVSM Assessment Rubric Highlighting Item #3](#)

Findings Description:

Twenty-six students were enrolled in the Capstone course during the spring semester. All (or 100%) scored a “5” on this learning objective, demonstrating an appropriate knowledge of case management resources in their local communities.

Attached Files

[!\[\]\(eabd9f9ababee93effadc3b380fe65fd_img.jpg\) MSVSM Assessment Results Table Highlighting Item #3](#)

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Capstone Field Experience Requirement Action Plan
Action Description:

In the next assessment cycle, the target for Item #4 on the Capstone rubric (incorporation of victim service organization data based on Capstone and ACE requirements) will increase by 10%, with an expectation that 80% of students will achieve a minimum score of “4” on this portion of the exit exam.

Update to Previous Cycle's Plan for Continuous Improvement

Previous Cycle's Plan For Continuous Improvement (Do Not Modify):

In 2014, the faculty teaching in the VSM Program began developing courses that are National Advocate Credentialing Program (NACP) approved. The NACP is a voluntary credentialing option for victim advocates. We currently offer a single course that is NACP “pre-approved” (CRIJ 5366 Advocacy and Case Management.) In addition to receiving credit toward the MSVSM degree, students successfully completing the course may apply for a provisional advocate credential. This is an entry-level certificate; prior experience is not required. CRIJ 5366 is the only NACP “Series A” course in the state of Texas. During the current assessment cycle, three additional courses (CRIJ 5383 Family Violence, CRIJ 5384 Child Abuse and Neglect, and CRIJ 5370 Elder Abuse) were designed according to NACP continuing education (“Series B”) requirements. Per the Committee, it would be logical to develop additional courses with advanced (“Series C”) credentialing in mind. Other NACP specialty topics include: drunk driving, sexual violence, and homicide. By offering additional electives focusing on these specialty topic areas, we can provide opportunities for student-practitioners to acquire more certifications.

Moving forward, the Committee will revisit prior discussions about: 1.) fall-only/”fixed” admissions; 2.) a possible portfolio requirement; and 3.) more meaningful program evaluation indicators.

In the summer of 2016, a pilot survey was administered to students. In the fall, the Committee will begin reviewing the data.

Update to Previous Cycle's Plan for Continuous Improvement

Previous Cycle's Plan For Continuous Improvement (Do Not Modify):

As this is a newly developed degree plan, the MS VSM committee which is comprised of all faculty teaching in the program will continue to meet on a regular basis. The committee is tasked with continuing to assess the content and learning objectives of the program.

Moving forward, a refined organizational structure for the leadership of this program should be discussed. A program coordinator would be an ideal approach to ensuring stability in assessment, continued program growth and development of internal processes and policies regarding various aspects of this program.

Update of Progress to the Previous Cycle's PCI:

The MS VSM Committee reviewed both the degree requirements and the program content. Since leading an organization requires administrative skills, the Committee proposed the development of a course that will focus, more strictly, on management. By and large, the existing coursework concentrates on victim service delivery. However, fundamentally, non-profit organizations are also businesses. To better prepare graduates for leadership roles in the non-profit sector, an understanding of management styles is also essential. The course will, additionally, familiarize students with human resource-related concerns and is slated for development in the spring of 2017. It was also the consensus of the committee that the CRIJ 5330 (Critical Analysis in Justice Administration) course requires substantial revision in order to better align with the program's goals. A new section of the course, which was originally developed for the MSLM Program, can be customized to address current controversies in the field of victim service provision. Much of the existing coursework focuses on non-profit organizations. For balance, a "systems" course is also needed. An ongoing review of the curriculum will continue into the next cycle. Due to budget considerations (and in lieu of appointing a program coordinator), the Committee will continue meeting regularly to assess and develop the program.

Plan For Continuous Improvement

Closing Summary:

In 2014, the faculty teaching in the VSM Program began developing courses that are National Advocate Credentialing Program (NACP) approved. The NACP is a voluntary credentialing option for victim advocates. We currently offer a single course that is NACP "pre-approved" (CRIJ 5366 Advocacy and Case Management.) In addition to receiving credit toward the MSVSM degree, students successfully completing the course may apply for a provisional advocate credential. This is an entry-level certificate; prior experience is not required. CRIJ 5366 is the only NACP "Series A" course in the state of Texas. During the current assessment cycle, three additional courses (CRIJ 5383 Family Violence, CRIJ 5384 Child Abuse and Neglect, and CRIJ 5370 Elder Abuse) were designed according to NACP continuing education ("Series B") requirements. Per the Committee, it would be logical to develop additional courses with advanced ("Series C") credentialing in mind. Other NACP specialty topics include: drunk driving, sexual violence, and homicide. By offering additional electives focusing on these specialty topic areas, we can provide opportunities for student-practitioners to acquire more certifications.

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