How many of us in professional social work can recall a field instructor who significantly impacted our professional development? No doubt the supervisor’s role is integral to a student’s training. However, in recent years competing interests are causing field supervision and training to undergo significant changes. New restrictions on government funding, increased demand for social workers in the labor market, and changes in agency task environments are having a profound impact on the traditional field supervision model in social work education. Increased enrollment of students and shortage of seasoned social workers in the field are making it hard for schools to find enough qualified field instructors. This is being reported not only in the US but in Great Britain and Australia as well. Schools of social work are resorting to increased use of alternative fieldwork structures and supervision arrangements, including task supervision, group supervision, external supervision, and shared supervision models (Cleak & Smith 2012). This was reported first hand at the Fall Los Angeles Consortium All School Field Meeting, as various university faculty shared that they are increasing the use of virtual field visits, joint supervision of students by a non-MSW staff person and a MSW external supervisor, and group supervision in lieu of individual supervision. A recent study (Cleak & Smith, 2012) surveyed 263 undergraduate social work students after they had completed their first or final field placement. The study identified that 55% of the placements used the traditional one student to one social work supervisor model, 14% used a social work supervisor external to the agency and 36% used various other models. One of the study’s findings was that high levels of dissatisfaction were reported by those students who received external social work supervision. Field faculty in the Consortium suggest that this can be mitigated when the external field instructor and the on-site supervisor agree to meet together weekly to coordinate the student’s learning. As some universities are relying more heavily on non-MSWs to provide supervision, field faculty are conflicted: can social work practice also be taught by business, healthcare, and other agency professionals? Another trend impacting field education is that government grants and contracts have increased reporting requirements which means supervisors spend more time in documentation and collecting data, leaving less time for training. Maintaining productivity and preparing for DMH audits are now a critical focus for most clinic directors. (cont. p. 2)

**New Azusa Pacific Field Faculty Member**

Louanna Law Bickham joins the Department of Graduate Social Work at Azusa Pacific University as full-time field faculty. Her responsibilities include teaching field seminars and other social work courses, providing supervision for students in their field internships, meeting with field instructors to ensure student’s meet field education standards, and the development of field internships. She has worked in the field of aging for several years, most recently at Huntington Hospital Senior Care Network. An LCSW as well as MFT (out of state), Bickham has also worked in marriage and family counseling, crisis intervention, and Catholic Social Ministries. She has taught at California State University, Los Angeles, and Pacific Oaks College, and prior to moving to California in 2000, she served as Director of Field Education at the University of Oklahoma and the University of Alaska, Fairbanks. She is involved with the National Association of Social Workers, and the Leukemia/Lymphoma Society. Her current passion is volunteering as a founding board member for the Pasadena Village, a new community-based support network that assists seniors to be able to live independently.
(cont. from p. 1) Weld (2012) suggests that “clinical supervision is no longer seen as a learning opportunity but has tipped into the territory of managing risk adversity through scrutiny and surveillance” (p. 22). How do we as social workers support the need for greater accountability while preserving the critical space students need to reflect and process their learning?

A third trend is the rise of evidence-based practice models (EBPs). In 2010 several LA County mental health agencies downsized their internship training programs in reaction to DMH funding cuts and mandates to re-train mental health staff in EBP models. In response, MSW programs have had to respond quickly by infusing EBP models into their curriculum. With so much emphasis on EBPs, some professionals are asking, what about practice-based evidence, the idea that practice wisdom is developed from experiences gained over years spent working in the field? Can social work practice be reduced to a series of instructional EBP workbooks and videos? Or is social work greater than the sum of its parts?

Fabricant (1985) suggests that the field of social work has historically shared the implicit nuances and intuitive characteristics of craft, “the individual social worker was expected to absorb and synthesize the information necessary to understand the intra-psychic dynamics of an individual or the complex forces at work in the community...it was the artisan who was the repository of skill and judgment” (p.389). Craftsmanship is the excellence that comes from creating with passion, care, and attention to detail. It is a quality that is honed, refined, and practiced over the course of a career. Apprenticeship through the traditional, time-intensive model of individual supervision is still the optimal method for teaching the craft of the social work helping profession. In her book “A Practical Guide to Transformative Supervision for the Helping Professional,” Nikki Weld (2012) calls us back to the heart of clinical mentoring, stating “I see my life purpose as fundamentally about learning to support the [practitioner’s] development of awareness, knowledge and self-actualization...supervision is transformational” (p. 21). In conclusion, while adapting to modern demands, social work field supervision must remain a protected space where students are given time to reflect and process what they are learning.

References & Resources

- The Coalition for Evidence-Based Social Policy-Social Programs that Work [http://evidencebasedprograms.org/](http://evidencebasedprograms.org/)
Clinical Supervision: Interview with APU Adjunct Field Faculty

Jacqui Bradbard, LCSW and Lili Florez, LCSW

What do you enjoy most about providing clinical supervision?

**Jacqui:** I enjoy talking with the interns about the clients they are working with and assisting them in further developing their clinical skills. It is fulfilling to see them growing as therapists.

**Lili:** I enjoy the passion and excitement that students bring to field. Seeing students make the connections from what they have learned in text books with actual clients.

What are some challenges you have encountered in clinical supervision?

**Jacqui:** One challenge I faced initially was how to structure group supervision. I have found it helpful to mix it up. I have done this by bringing in different discussion topics, relevant videos, planning occasional off site meetings and case presentations, while still leaving time for them to discuss critical case issues.

**Lili:** A challenge that I have encountered is a student who had anxiety issues and was unable to complete her responsibilities. Speaking with the field liaison and establishing a plan was quite helpful.

What are some typical learning problems that you see come up for new interns?

**Jacqui:** New interns are learning how to develop their professional role as a therapist, and manage their own emotions in response to what is shared in sessions. This can be mentally, emotionally and physically draining. We talk a lot about “self-care” and how to manage stress and take care of themselves in order to continue to effectively care for others.

**Lili:** Students tend to have difficulty connecting with their feelings. They are focused on (Cont. on pg. 4).

Use of Reflective Questions in Supervision

1. What concerns or issues does this case bring up for you?
2. What do you hope to take-away from our supervision session today?
3. How would you evaluate the effectiveness of your intervention?
4. What do you understand about the situation?
5. How has this issue or situation impacted you?
6. What feelings, thoughts or ideas do you have about the situation?
7. Are there any patterns to these ideas and feelings? Have you experienced them anywhere before?
8. How did you respond to the situation?
9. What implications does this situation have in terms of professional ethics, laws or treatment protocols?
10. How would you have liked the session with client to have gone?
11. What could you have done differently?
12. What theoretical framework might apply here?
13. What understanding or insight has been gained?


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January 25, 2013

apumswfieldinstructors.blogspot.com/
Field Highlights: Welcome to New Field Site
DaVita Peritoneal Dialysis Central

DaVita is a national healthcare provider in kidney care, and in 2012 was ranked #3 among overall Health Care Medical facilities and #1 in innovation by Fortune magazine.

We are pleased to add DaVita Peritoneal Dialysis Central, Riverside as an MSW field site. Dialysis social workers are an integral part of the clinical care team and work closely with doctors and nurses to improve the health and well being of patients with kidney disease. Social work practice skills include addressing patients’ psychosocial, emotional and financial needs. We are pleased to welcome Dannely Hernandez, MSW and Gracie Vargas, MSW as new APU field instructors!

Clinical Supervision: Interview with APU Adjunct Field Faculty (Continued from pg. 3)

Lili: being present for others, but have difficulty understanding how being aware of self is important.

Please describe the theories you try to integrate in clinical supervision.

Jacqui: We discuss different theoretical orientations including Person Centered, Family Systems, Solution Focused, Narrative Therapy, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), and Heart Therapy. When students present a case, I ask them to discuss the theories they are using in their work with clients.

Lili: I utilize cognitive behavioral therapy in teaching/working with students. This is a very effective treatment model.

Is there anything you would like to tell a brand new field instructor/supervisor?

Jacqui: Starting out as a first time supervisor can be daunting. For example, when taking on the liability of supervising interns or students it’s easy to worry about what could happen, or doubt you’re ready for this responsibility. However, I would encourage a new supervisor/field instructor to remember that their years of work experience are valuable. While we are all life-long learners, we have a lot to share with students. It is a privilege to be part of their growth.

Lili: Yes, training a student requires much time, however, it is quite a rewarding experience. Students are truly eager to learn and they also have much to teach us.

Jacqui Bradbard, LCSW works as a therapist and clinical supervisor at Olive Branch Counseling Center.

Lili Florez, LCSW works as a mental health consultant with the Pomona Unified School District.