

Exemplar 6: ASCA Model
CSP 710A: Professional Seminar, Fall 2013 & Spring 2014
Standards Addressed: 17, 27, 28

Introduction:

The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) developed a model to be used by school counselors to address critical components of school counseling programs and to promote a uniformed professional school counselor identity. The ASCA model addresses the foundation, management, delivery, and accountability aspects of a school counseling program. Each of these components serves the greater purpose of advocacy, creating systemic changes, and positioning the school counselor as a leader. School counselors should practice these components and complete these documents to communicate to stakeholders the purpose, mission, and vision of the school counseling program.

During this past school year, I have had the opportunity to practice the ASCA model. Another trainee and I collaborated with school counselors, school psychologist, and the vice-principal at our school to revise the mission statement of the school counseling program. We also utilized data generated from surveys, interviews, and school record reviews to create intentional guidance curriculum to address student academic and social/emotional needs. The stress management classroom lessons conducted in the fall semester produced positive results in changing the student's attitude towards stress, skills to manage stress, and knowledge on symptoms of stress. In the spring semester, we began our small group intentional intervention on academic skills. As of our first evaluation, our intervention seems promising. We hope to report positive results on the small group intervention through the use of a flashlight report and presentation at the end of the semester.

Standard 17: Foundation of School Counseling Profession

- At the beginning of the fall semester, we began the process of revising the school counseling program's mission and vision statements. After we located the mission and vision of the school, we were able to revise and use it as the school counseling program's mission and vision statements. This process saved us the time developing a mission and vision statement and also helped us align the program's mission and vision with the school's.
- My colleagues and I also utilized the school's student health survey data to devise the middle school curriculum on stress management. Similarly, we used report card data and teacher comments to devise middle and high school group curriculum to improve

academic skills. Through the academic skills curriculum, we touched on future aspects, such as college and career. In both curricula, we strived to address self-awareness and self-advocacy, such as knowing when and from whom to seek assistance. Through this activity, I learned how to utilize data and information gathered from multiple sources to develop and devise interventions to serve my students.

Standard 27: Collaboration, Coordination and Team Building

- Working on our ASCA model was a great opportunity to build rapport with school staff and administration. Collaborating with staff members outside of the school counseling team helped me understand the needs and concerns of different stakeholders. During rapport building, I obtained their buy-in and interest by incorporating their ideas, such as the specific topics to be discussed in the academic skills group. This process taught me that utilizing different talents and skills through collaboration can maximize our results. Without the support of faculty and staff, we could not go into their classrooms and recruit students for our groups.
- In addition to building rapport and working with staff members, we also worked with parents to obtain permission for students to be in our academic skills group. Through answering the parent's questions, we were able to build rapport, explain the purpose of our group, and obtain buy-in. Though it was difficult to reach parents, our efforts fostered an understanding and sense of trust between the school and parents. Parents are now aware of our efforts to address student academic needs outside of the classroom.

Standard 28: Organizational & System Development

- During the development of our small group curriculum, administrators were concerned that students were removed from core subject instructions for an extended period of time. We clarified that our lessons were limited to one 30-minute session per group, per week. We also minimized instances where students were removed from core classes. As of our first evaluation, we found no correlation between changes in the student's grade and the class from which they were removed. This data served to assure administrators and faculty that student grades were not negatively affected by the group. This process helped me learn the importance of sharing our findings with stakeholders. Not only does sharing information show our success and effectiveness, it also addresses uncertainties and concerns about the group process.

- When aligning the school counseling program's mission and vision statements with the school's, I learned that there are multiple layers of approval that the school counselor must obtain to adopt a new mission and vision statement. Though we were limited by the time we have at the site, we were able to discuss the topic of a revised mission and vision statements during student support services team meetings where an administrator is present.

Conclusion:

Working on the ASCA model has pushed me out of my comfort zone to collaborate with administrators, faculty, staff, parents, and students. Previously, I believed that I was imposing on others and using their valuable time if I did not absolutely require their assistance. Through completing this project, we built rapport and camaraderie with various stakeholders. In most instances, administrators, faculty, and staff appreciate that we solicited their ideas and beliefs and that we were able to address most of them. Having these positive interactions with different persons at school reminded me that one of the reasons I wanted to be a school counselor is the positive and productive human interactions. As a new school counselor, I will definitely need to reach out to others to get to know the organization and culture before I can begin implementing my program.

If I have the opportunity to complete more work on this project, I would like to utilize parts of this program that were incomplete due to our status as trainees. For example, one component of management is an annual agreement between the school counseling team and the administration detailing the responsibilities and goals of the school counseling department and budget required to fulfill the agreement. Though I was unable to practice this component, I learned that this can be a great tool to demonstrate the school counseling program's accountability to various stakeholders. It also establishes the school counseling team as a cohesive team of professionals who have plans to address data-driven needs, rather than a group of loosely-related individuals who are reacting to events as they occur in a haphazard fashion.