THE ROLE OF THE COOPERATING SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGIST

Building Confidence

The beginning graduate student teacher is likely to be a little anxious and apprehensive. Instilling self-confidence in the candidate should be an ongoing objective of the cooperating speech-language pathologist. Prior to the student teaching experience, the candidate has had practicum experience with a variety of clients within the Ewing Clinic and off-campus placements associated with Ithaca College. The first full-time placement may, however, be the candidate’s first full-time fieldwork experience. This experience represents an opportunity for the candidate to integrate academic and theoretical aspects of therapy into real world clinical practice with a greater number and variety of clients. Suggestions to ease the transition into this new experience and build confidence follow.

1. On the first day, spend time orienting the candidate to the clinical setting by getting him/her acquainted with the physical surroundings and other personnel.

2. The candidate must be oriented in the site's policies for fire safety, intruders, and other Safe Schools mandated school policies.

3. Be specific and clear in outlining the expectations and responsibilities you have established for the candidate. Topics should include: therapy, assessment procedures, reports, materials, meetings, and resources. Many cooperating speech-language pathologists have found it helpful to provide the candidate with a written outline or checklist.

4. Provide the candidate with some opportunity to observe you doing therapy to acquaint him/her with the clinical program. The extent of this observation will depend upon your personal preference and/or style of instruction.

5. Suggest readings in texts or journals when appropriate to facilitate better understanding of the nature of specific disorders or therapeutic approaches.

6. Give positive feedback and encouragement for work well done as well as suggestions for improvement.
Teaching Skills/Strategies/Approaches

Your approach to teaching the candidate will vary according to your own preference and style, setting and caseload. Cooperating speech-language pathologists are encouraged to be flexible in meeting the needs of individual candidates. While all candidates who receive a graduate externship placement must meet the standards of the college to do so, there is a wide range of ability among candidates and some will need more guidance and support than others.

It is desirable to expose the candidate to a variety of therapeutic approaches and strategies whenever possible. Assignment of appropriate reading in texts or journals is left to your discretion.

Many cooperating speech-language pathologists have found it worthwhile to give the candidate responsibility for two or three therapy sessions initially and to gradually increase responsibility for the entire caseload, if appropriate.

If at any time during the externship, you as supervisor think that you or the candidate needs assistance in making the externship a positive learning experience, contact the college supervisor as soon as possible.

Providing Feedback

It is essential for the cooperating speech-language pathologist to observe the graduate candidate frequently and provide written and/or oral feedback regarding the quality of the therapy interaction. Strengths and weaknesses of clinical skills should be specified.

You may devise your own format for evaluating the graduate candidate or follow the outline of the college forms. You are requested to complete a minimum of two comprehensive written evaluations on the forms provided by the college (midterm and final) and submit them to the college coordinator. Prior to sending the form to the coordinator, please go over the evaluation with the graduate candidate.

1. The content of feedback and supervision often progress in a three step sequence.
2. The cooperating speech-language pathologist gives the candidate specific suggestions for changes in the therapy program or assessment procedures.
3. The cooperating speech-language pathologist assists the candidate in problem-solving and self-evaluation.
4. The candidate problem-solves more independently and self-evaluates therapy and assessment performance, with a steadily decreasing level of assistance from the cooperating speech-language pathologist.

On the final evaluation, you are asked to recommend a letter grade for the candidate’s overall performance during the placement. Additional written comments elaborating on progress, strengths, weaknesses, etc would be helpful to the college supervisor. The final grade assigned to the candidate by the college supervisor takes into consideration the following:

1. The cooperating speech-language pathologist’s grade recommendation based on clinical performance.
2. The quality of the completed assignments required during the placement.
3. The candidate’s overall growth and level of professionalism.
STUDENT TEACHING REQUIREMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR SITE SUPERVISION

Requirements

Ithaca College is accredited by the American-Speech-Language-Hearing Association's Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology (CAA). The following requirements meet both the CAA standards and Ithaca College's Department of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology standards for supervision of graduate candidates:

1. An ASHA certified individual (CCC-SLP or CCC-A) must be on site or available for consultation 100% of the time while the candidate clinician is engaged in direct client contact.
2. A minimum of 25% of direct client contact time by the candidate must be directly observed in real time by the supervisor.
3. A minimum of 50% of the candidate’s evaluation/diagnostic sessions is encouraged.
4. The graduate candidate is expected to obtain a minimum of 100-120 hours of client contact time for each 8-week externship.
5. Ithaca College requires that the graduate candidate be formally evaluated/graded by the site supervisor a minimum of two times while the graduate candidate is at the placement, once at midterm and once as a final grade. The appropriate evaluation forms should be submitted to the Ithaca College Clinic Director when completed. Programs are encouraged to use evaluation devices specific to their work site.
6. The supervisor should become familiar with the minimum requirements the candidate is expected to complete over the course of the placement and act as a facilitator and advocate in helping the candidate complete his/her requirements. Additional requirements at each location are at the discretion of the site/supervisor.

Suggestions

1. The graduate candidate should be given a comprehensive orientation to his/her placement. This should include a discussion of expectations, roles and responsibilities of the candidate and supervisor as well as other professionals and staff at the placement. It is helpful for graduate candidates to be provided with a tour of the school and to be given copies of any written policies or procedures which must be followed, including exposure to the school’s curriculum and Safe Schools policies.
2. Before independently administering a diagnostic test, the graduate candidate should observe the site supervisor giving the test at least once. The first time the candidate administers a test, it is often helpful for both supervisor and candidate to separately record data and obtain results. The candidate and site supervisor’s results can then be compared and feedback provided to the graduate candidate.
3. Verbal and/or written feedback should generally be provided by the cooperating teacher each time the graduate candidate is observed. Supervisors are encouraged to consider the candidate’s level of experience with specific disorder types in making judgments regarding clinical performance.
4. It may be helpful for the graduate candidate and cooperating teacher to meet once per week for approximately one hour to discuss the candidate’s progress and areas needing improvement. Discussions should include observations regarding therapeutic, diagnostic
and interpersonal skills as well as writing abilities.

5. It is recommended that the graduate candidate and site supervisor establish at least two measurable goals per week for the graduate candidate to accomplish.
MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR COMPLETION OF CANDIDATE TEACHING

1. Before initiating independent therapy, the graduate candidate should observe the site supervisor as appropriate. The rate at which the candidate assumes responsibility for new clients will depend on the candidate’s readiness and past experience with similar cases. Progress/SOAP notes should be completed following each therapy session.

2. Before independently administering a diagnostic test, it is recommended that the graduate candidate should observe the site supervisor giving the test at least once. The candidate is expected to become familiar with procedures for test administration and interpretation.

3. The graduate candidate should take full advantage of all diagnostic opportunities as determined appropriate by the site supervisor. A written summary is required for each test administered. Participation in comprehensive diagnostic evaluations and reporting is expected.

4. The graduate candidate will write an IEP for at least one of the clients/patients evaluated while at the placement, or, at sites where evaluation opportunities are limited, write an IEP for a new client/patient entering the caseload during the candidate's placement.

5. The graduate candidate is responsible for writing at least three curriculum-based objectives for each of a minimum of three clients/patients receiving services from the graduate candidate.

6. The graduate candidate will read and write summaries for at least two (2) articles, book chapters, or other material related to disorders seen at the placement site. The site supervisor will guide the candidate in making an appropriate selection regarding these readings.

7. The graduate candidate is encouraged to attend all team, interdisciplinary, etc. meetings related to clients/patients receiving therapy from the candidate.

8. The graduate candidate is encouraged to take full advantage of collaborative programming with other professionals and should observe at least one session of the following: adaptive physical education, special education, reading, occupational therapy, regular education class. The candidate should write a short description of this observation.

9. The graduate candidate is responsible for following all procedures required for legal documentation of clients seen and all personnel policies appropriate for professionals on site at the externship placement.

10. The graduate candidate is responsible for meeting professional qualities and dispositions expectations (please see page 15).

***PLEASE NOTE: Neither the site nor the site supervisor is responsible for guaranteeing that the candidate will obtain his/her minimum number of clock hours for ASHA certification; however a minimum of 100-120 hours direct client contact time per 8- to 10-week experience is expected.

The graduate candidate is expected to show increased independence over the course of the experience. He/she should assume as many responsibilities of the cooperating speech-language pathologist position as is appropriate, relative to the experience and competence level the candidate has demonstrated. Candidate externs are not expected to function at the same level of competence as a licensed, certified speech-language pathologist. By the completion of the second externship, candidates should be prepared for a clinical fellowship year, as demonstrated by having fulfilled all requirements on ASHA's Knowledge and Skills Acquisition (KASA) form.
Appendix H: Checklist of Mentor Teacher Responsibilities

___ Participate in a 3-way introductory conference with the student teacher and college supervisor

___ Conduct an initial planning session with your student teacher. Discuss the following:
___ your daily and weekly schedule of classes and responsibilities
___ your general arrival and departure times at school
___ days/times of school, department, team, grade-level, or committee meetings
___ a general calendar for when the student teacher will assume responsibilities for various planning, teaching, managing, and assessment tasks (specifically identify a tentative period when the student teacher will assume full responsibility for planning, teaching, managing, and assessing, minimally 1 week, but ideally longer)
___ the format in which lesson and unit plans will be completed (the student teacher can use the IC planning format, the school district format, or your own preferred format… remember, though, that your student teacher will need to write more detailed plans than those used by many experienced teachers)
___ a regular time for discussions of the student teacher’s planning and progress (these feedback sessions should take place at least once a week; many mentor teachers conduct daily feedback sessions; setting a regular date is helpful)
___ the nature and needs of the diverse students in your class(es), including specific IEP’s for any identified special needs students

___ Give your student teacher a tour of the school. Include the location of the following:
___ principal’s office
___ counselor’s office (or special ed office, etc.)
___ nurse’s office
___ library
___ cafeteria (where do teachers have coffee/tea, eat lunch, etc? refrigerator/microwave availability?)
___ copy machines, paper and supplies, etc.
___ classrooms of department, team, and/or grade-level colleagues

___ Explain school procedures for:

___ teacher parking (assigned parking? parking sticker required?)

___ teacher sign-in and sign-out in the main office

___ student teacher absence for illness (who should be contacted, and how?)

___ use of copy machines, library, computer labs, telephones, etc.

___ referrals of students to principal, counselor, special education, detention, etc.

___ contact with parents/guardians

___ fire and emergency procedures, school violence prevention techniques