Chapter 1
Student Success Plans as a Proactive, Collaborative Gatekeeping Strategy

Jessica Z. Taylor
https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8128-2000
Central Methodist University, USA

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This chapter will describe a proactive, collaborative student success plan that can be used as a trauma-informed gatekeeping strategy with counseling students. Its purpose is to guide students onto a path to success during their program, to avoid unanticipated interference with success as they progress through the program, and to informally address student issues prior to formal remediation procedures. The student success plan builds upon student strengths and identifies support resources prior to a student issue becoming a problem that could lead to formal remediation or program dismissal.

INTRODUCTION

Gatekeeping in counselor education is explicitly required by the American Counseling Association's Code of Ethics (ACA, 2014, F.6.b Gatekeeping and Remediation). When gatekeeping, counselor educators are observing for indicators of "limitations that might impede performance" (ACA, 2014, p. 13). Kimball et al. (2019) discussed how counselor educator gatekeeping practices are crucial for preventing "gate slippage" (p. 55). In gate slippage, students presenting with professional issues or concerns are passed through counseling programs and allowed to enter the counseling profession where their clients' welfare is potentially at risk

(Banik et al., 2024). If counseling students are allowed to enter the profession when their program faculty were aware of potential concerns that could pose a risk to client welfare, the program and its faculty could be found liable for the damage done to clients by such students (Salpietro et al., 2021).

Many counselor educators have observed students with some sort of problem of professional competence while they were students in a counseling program (Brown-Rice & Furr, 2016). Brown-Rice and Furr (2016) found the most frequently identified areas of concern involved student challenges with clinical skills, interpersonal skills, academic skills, the ability to regulate emotions, or general unprofessional behavior. These areas of concern may interfere with the learning environment, other students' learning, interactions with other students or faculty, and counselor educators' well-being (Brown-Rice & Furr, 2016). Gatekeeping is a process that not only protects the counseling profession and its clients, but also protects those employed by and enrolled within counseling training programs.

Counseling programs often require applicants to submit transcripts, personal statements, and letters of recommendation when applying for admission. This is often the first time gatekeeping occurs in counseling programs. While reviewing admission files, counselor educators may identify potential concerns, which could lead students to encounter challenges throughout the training program. This may lead counselor educators to not extend an offer of admission over other applicants without such potential concerns. These concerns, rather than being personal short-comings, may instead be rooted in past trauma that resulted in outcomes that may impede future educational success. Given the situation and support resources the student had available at the time, living through past trauma may have resulted in a low undergraduate GPA, having to withdraw from classes, failing classes, poor writing skills, a background check with prior legal involvement, impersonal letters of recommendations, lack of trust in authority figures, lack of self-confidence in their abilities, or perhaps not knowing how to advocate for themselves or communicate their needs. Although valid concerns, not extending consideration for admission based on these factors is not a trauma-informed indicator for predicting success in a counseling program. Basing admission on such factors can serve to keep individuals out of the profession who could be talented counselors with the right support and guidance.

This chapter will describe a proactive, collaborative student success plan that can be used as a trauma-informed gatekeeping strategy at any point in time while a student is enrolled in a counseling program, even as early as an initial advising appointment prior to starting courses. Its purpose is to guide students onto a path to success early in their program and to avoid unanticipated interference with success as they progress through the program. If concerns are identified during the admissions process, but are not concerning enough to decline admission outright,

19 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage: www.igi-global.com/chapter/student-success-plans-as-a-proactive-collaborative-gatekeeping-strategy/364163

Related Content

Learning Exceptions to Refine a Domain Expertise

Rallou Thomopoulos (2009). *Encyclopedia of Data Warehousing and Mining, Second Edition (pp. 1129-1136).*

www.irma-international.org/chapter/learning-exceptions-refine-domain-expertise/10963

Secure Computation for Privacy Preserving Data Mining

Yehuda Lindell (2009). *Encyclopedia of Data Warehousing and Mining, Second Edition (pp. 1747-1752).*

www.irma-international.org/chapter/secure-computation-privacy-preserving-data/11054

Multiclass Molecular Classification

Chia Huey Ooi (2009). *Encyclopedia of Data Warehousing and Mining, Second Edition (pp. 1352-1357).*

www.irma-international.org/chapter/multiclass-molecular-classification/10997

Pattern Synthesis in SVM Based Classifier

C. Radha (2009). *Encyclopedia of Data Warehousing and Mining, Second Edition (pp. 1517-1523).*

www.irma-international.org/chapter/pattern-synthesis-svm-based-classifier/11021

Web Page Extension of Data Warehouses

Anthony Scime (2009). *Encyclopedia of Data Warehousing and Mining, Second Edition (pp. 2090-2095).*

www.irma-international.org/chapter/web-page-extension-data-warehouses/11108