Skills for Successful Fieldwork Supervision
Objectives

- Participants will identify:
  - Techniques for establishing, building, and maintaining supervisory relationships
  - Techniques for dealing with issues and deficits which become apparent during fieldwork

http://1.bp.blogspot.com/_Vr8XI0cbUZA/SQ5gET37AfI/AAAAAAAAD5I/l5LxjcABGQo/s400/Image+%3D+Americans+with+Disabilities+Act.gif
Relationship Case Scenario #1

- **Jill**
  - Good student who seems to be grasping concepts and interventions at your clinic
  - Always arrives to work on time
  - Fails to turn in documentation and activity analysis assignments on time
    - Emails you or leaves you a note saying she is working on the assignment, but it will be late and explains why
    - Excuses are often very detailed and personal
      - For example, her brother’s dog died, and she was up all night counseling him; her printer was out of ink; she had to sit with her ill grandmother during the weekend
    - Asks you not to mark her down for her late assignments because she is doing her best to accomplish everything

- You are starting to distrust her

- How should you respond to her tardy assignments?
Relationship Case Scenario #2

Bob

- Arrives on time every day
- Appears to be very intelligent and have strong theoretical base
- When treating a patient, he attacks your intervention without respect for your opinions
- Argues with feedback you provide on written assignments
- Criticisms are not necessarily related to information you are giving him and appear to be more personally directed
- Sometimes he rolls his eyes and mutters under his breath

How should you respond?
Food for Thought

- What characteristics do you seek in a mentor?
- Who are two people you know that fit your description of a good mentor?
Self-Efficacy Development

- Allow students to:
  - Experience changing environment and adapt
  - Establish personal goals based on inter-personal reflections and your feedback
  - Participate in active learning through role playing, modeling, visual imagery, and open communication

Food for Thought

If you have been a fieldwork educator (or have participated in other mentoring roles), what types of things are important in establishing, maintaining, and building a relationship with your student/mentee?
Basic Educator-Student Relationship Skills

- **Be healthy**
  - Find ways to balance productivity, leisure, and rest
    - Balance nutrition
    - Balance physical exercise
    - Balance emotional exercise

- **Focus on building trust and respect, not popularity**

- **Plan ahead for follow up sessions**
  (have short and long term goals)
Basic Educator-Student Relationship Skills

- **Become an excellent decision maker**
  - Write down situations and identify 3 possible options
  - Make pro/con lists and assess how decisions impact your short and long term goals
  - Decide on an option and act

- **Tell students WHY things must be done**
  - Promotes their understanding and reasoning skills
  - Motivates them to do their best; they will be more apt to respond quickly to requests
  - Helps them see and understand the big picture and how its pieces fit
  - Allows them to be reflective and ask questions
  - Improves communication
Basic Educator-Student Relationship Skills

- Allow time for reflective thinking to develop creativity and innovations
  - Set aside personal time every day to think with your pen and paper in hand
  - Every time you have a significant event, allow time to reflect
  - Reflect on communication, participation, and interaction
    - What did you do well?
    - What can you improve?

http://i.ehow.com/images/GlobalPhoto/Articles/4920939/homeschoollist_Full.jpg
Basic Educator-Student Relationship Skills

- Be an excellent communicator, which means being an excellent listener as well
  - Know what you want to say and deliver your message with respect, clarity, and honesty
    - When sending feedback, deliver this message:
      It is because we respect one another that we can talk openly about things and not harm our relationship.
      - Address uncomfortable issues
  - Create an open and honest communication environment
    - This frees people to be themselves without hidden agendas or games
    - Everyone knows where everyone stands
  - Ask for feedback after communication to make sure the message was understood.
Basic Educator-Student Relationship Skills

- Be an excellent communicator, which means being an excellent listener as well
  - Think about your audience and adjust your communication accordingly
  - Think about timing; there are times people are not able or ready to listen
  - Listen with your eyes; pay attention to things like body language, tone of voice, eye contact, and fidgeting
  - Listen to people rather than against them
    - Sometimes people ignore others’ thoughts and communication because they are so determined to be heard
    - When you are thinking about the next thing you are going to say before a person has finished talking, you are listening against what that person is saying
    - Stay open-minded and welcome new insight/information
Basic Educator-Student Relationship Skills

- Be solution-driven and asset-focused rather than problem-based and need-driven
  - Identify each individual’s assets and discover several solutions for the needs/issuless you face
    - This will decrease stress and increase confidence and energy
  - Believe in yourself as a powerful human being with a lifetime of experiences and many answers
  - Do a self-assessment to discover your strengths and uncover areas for growth
    - Write a monthly personal strength-building goal
    - Write a monthly personal growth goal
    - Remember personal development is an on-going process; the more honest you are, the more improvement you will make
Be solution-driven and asset-focused rather than problem-based and need-driven

- Establish a way to measure your goals; this will enhance your ability to follow through with commitments
  - Assess your past, present, and future
  - Determine where you are and where you are going
  - Establish a realistic timeline
    - What time of day, day of the week, and time of the year are you most productive?

- By consistently working on strengths and weaknesses, you will improve self-confidence and achieve more
Basic Educator-Student Relationship Skills

- Be solution-driven and asset-focused rather than problem-based and need-driven
  - Accept 100% responsibility for all of your actions and behaviors
    - You alone are responsible for your actions
    - Do not let your emotions block your objectivity
  - Take control of your internal conversations
    - Envision yourself positively and paint a mental image of things you want to achieve
    - Engage in self-affirmations, goal statements, and vision statements
    - Write positive things in places you will see them

Information adapted from David, 2001
Food for Thought

What are you going to do today that will help you become a better educator/mentor?
Review of Relationship
Case Scenario #1

- Jill
  - Good student who seems to be grasping concepts and interventions at your clinic
  - Always arrives to work on time
  - Fails to turn in documentation and activity analysis assignments on time
    - Emails you or leaves you a note saying she is working on the assignment, but it will be late and explains why
    - Excuses are often very detailed and personal
      - For example, her brother’s dog died, and she was up all night counseling him; her printer was out of ink; she had to sit with her ill grandmother during the weekend
    - Asks you not to mark her down for her late assignments because she is doing her best to accomplish everything

- You are starting to distrust her
Review of Relationship
Case Scenario #2

- Bob

- Arrives on time every day
- Appears to be very intelligent and have strong theoretical base
- When treating a patient, he attacks your intervention without respect for your opinions
- Argues with feedback you provide on written assignments
- Criticisms are not necessarily related to information you are giving him and appear to be more personally directed
- Sometimes he rolls his eyes and mutters under his breath
Food for Thought

Knowing what you know now, what would you do in each scenario?
Possible Ideas for Jill’s Case

- Difficulty with time management; did not allow time to prepare for the assignment
- True crisis and need for your flexibility
- Recommendations
  - Since you do not want to be taken advantage of, you may want to require evidence to support a deadline extension
  - Set a policy in the student manual regarding late assignments
  - Discuss reasons assignments should be completed in a timely fashion and how late work can impact professionalism
Possible Ideas for Bob’s Case

- Hostile, unhappy students generally have communication issues
- They do not feel their thoughts are being heard; providing opportunities to share thoughts usually resolves conflicts
- Have the student keep a journal or do other writing to see underlying causes of anger
  - Is the student being harmed or in fear of being harmed?
  - Is the student dealing with personal/psychological concerns?
  - Is the student “just trying to push your buttons”?
- Have a direct conversation to allow the student to voice arguments and you to calmly respond
Possible Ideas for Bob’s Case

- **Acknowledge your role as an educator**
  - Did you provide explicit instructions?
  - Is there a student manual which outlines policies and procedures?

- **If you have made a mistake, meet with the student in a neutral, private area (not your office) to talk calmly and rationally; model appropriate communication**

- **Last, but not least, be sure to call the student’s Academic Fieldwork Educator to help intervene and brainstorm for creative solutions**
  - Lisa Tekell
    - (901) 448-8072
    - ltekell@utmem.edu

Information adapted from http://www.utexas.edu/courses/svinicki/398T/Difficult%20Students.htm
Students with Problem Behaviors

- Identify student problems and discuss with colleagues; initiate use of weekly student feedback logs

- Try to resolve problems
  - Meet with students and articulate concerns clearly with examples
  - Keep notes of your meeting and have both of you sign and date your summary
  - Focus on performance problems rather than personal issues
  - Conclude by developing plan of action that identifies how the students will remediate deficits
  - Set measurable objectives
  - Utilize weekly feedback logs with copies for supervisors and students
Students with Problem Behaviors

- Collaborate with the school
  - Do not wait too long before calling Academic Fieldwork Coordinator Lisa Tekell
    - (901) 448-8072
    - ltekell@utmem.edu
  - She may decide to meet with supervisors and students to review action plans and progress
  - You may collectively complete behavioral contracts
  - The longer you wait to make this call, the less likely the student is to successfully complete the fieldwork
Students with Problem Behaviors

- Hold follow up meetings between supervisors and students
  - Meet regularly, preferably once or twice weekly, to measure progress and provide performance feedback
  - Keep accurate meeting notes

- If students are not making sufficient progress, meetings with the fieldwork supervisors, students, and Academic Fieldwork Coordinator Lisa Tekell are warranted
  - Decisions may need to be made regarding possibilities of success or failure
  - Options to consider may include extending the fieldwork time if progress is being made or terminating the fieldwork with failing grades
  - Decisions will be made collaboratively between the school, fieldwork site, and students

Information adapted from McCreedy & Graham (1997)

O’Connor, T. University of South Alabama Department of Occupational Therapy. Available at: [http://www.southalabama.edu/alliedhealth/ot/fwsupervision/remediation-judg.html](http://www.southalabama.edu/alliedhealth/ot/fwsupervision/remediation-judg.html)