Assessment Implementation:
Reinventing Training for Entry-Level Conduct Officers

Student Affairs Assessment & Research Conference 2014

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Assessment...

...balancing need and desire!
The Context

- Entry-Level Conduct Officers (ELCOs) often find their work tedious, frustrating, or burdensome.
- It is the role of the mentor/supervisor to insure that each ELCO is learning through experience.
- Former ELCO’s were frustrated: perceived lack of consistency; confusion surrounding policies at private v. public institutions; difficulty negotiating ambiguity.
- Recent research focuses on student learning through conduct; we wanted to incorporate ALL learners; assessment itself is a learning process.
Assessment Plan

• Seek support from all parties involved (Dean, Supervisors, ELCO’s, Graduate Assistant)
• Refer to the experts (CAS, Current Research, Survey Data)
• Utilize feedback from past ELCO’s
• Develop a framework to inform training
• Develop a simple assessment tool
• Administer prior to training (Pre-Test)
• Administer following training (Post-Test)
• Administer the same assessment following first case to track learning and adjust training (Continuous Improvement)
• Use feedback to plan continuous training sessions and next annual training
Recommended Practices: CAS

CAS manual training recommendations:

• Describe “judicial” policies, authority, and jurisdiction
• Review the institution’s philosophy on student conduct Identify the roles and functions of all constituents
• Review constitutional and legal individual and institutional rights and responsibilities, and potential third-party involvement (attorneys, guardians, witnesses, law enforcement, media, advisors, etc.)
• Clearly define all administrative sanctions
• Review ethical considerations
• Describe available referral resources (personal counseling, support groups, campus and community)
• Review developmental and interpersonal issues likely to arise among college students
Respondents mostly GA’s at mid-size public institutions

Initial training (90%) included some type of observation (shadowing, video, simulation)

Most (86%) reported training on educational sanctioning

Fair amount of (60%) respondents reported administrative training (incident reports, data entry, filing)

Continuing training most often included one-on-one instruction (83%), observation (50%), webinars (46%)

Additional training requested: crisis management, academic misconduct, case management software, mediation, restorative justice, how to handle conduct meetings
Past ELCO Feedback

• Training was inadequate
  – Wanted more interactive instruction
  – Needed more frequent, continuous training
  – Yearned for a safe space to discuss challenges

• The nature of conduct (inherent ambiguity) was frustrating and frightening

• Experienced confusion surrounding who to consult with questions and concerns
Result – Phase Model

- Training
- Practice
- Ongoing Training

Policy
Purpose
Process

Training
Experience

Emerging Questions
UNDERACHIEVEMENT

The Tallest Blade of Grass
is the First to be Cut by the Lawnmower.
Simple Assessment Tool

Rate your overall level of comfort concerning your involvement in the student conduct process:
1  2  3  4  5  6  7
Not Anxious at All  Ambivalent  Very Anxious

Rate your knowledge of Higher Education Law:
1  2  3  4  5  6  7
No knowledge  Highly Knowledgeable

Rate your knowledge of the Heidelberg Student Code of Conduct:
1  2  3  4  5  6  7
No knowledge  Highly Knowledgeable

Rate your knowledge of the potential sanctions utilized in the Heidelberg conduct process:
1  2  3  4  5  6  7
No knowledge  Highly Knowledgeable

Rate your knowledge of the Heidelberg Incident Communication Form and its use and protocol:
1  2  3  4  5  6  7
No knowledge  Highly Knowledgeable

Rate your knowledge of confidentiality and how it impacts student conduct:
1  2  3  4  5  6  7
No knowledge  Highly Knowledgeable

Rate your confidence level concerning using COCO:
1  2  3  4  5  6  7
Not Confident at All  Very Confident

Rate your confidence level concerning conducting a student conduct conference with a student:
1  2  3  4  5  6  7
Not Confident at All  Very Confident
1. What specific pieces of knowledge (policies) do you believe you need to be successful as a conduct coordinator?

2. What specific training (strategies, procedures) do you believe you need to be successful as a conduct coordinator?

3. Please share any additional concerns you have at this juncture:
Findings (2012-2013)

- **Process** (1 = Low 7 = High)
  - Knowledge and comfort pre-training: 3.8
  - Knowledge and comfort post-training: 5.1
  - Knowledge and comfort after first case: 4.8
  - *Increased... then dipped!*

- **Policy** (1 = Low 7 = High)
  - Knowledge pre-training: 3.52
  - Knowledge post-training: 5.14
  - Knowledge after first case: 4.27
  - *Increased... then dipped!*
What specific training (strategies, procedures) do you need to be successful as a conduct coordinator?

• Policy
  – Code of Conduct review
  – Clear policy definitions
  – Clear definition of sanctions

• Process
  – How adjudication is determined
  – Shadowing and/or mock conferences
  – Creation of intentional educational resolutions
Outcomes (2012-2013)

We excelled in:

- Confidence with creating educational sanctions
- Confidence with software
- Confidence with conducting conferences

Areas of training improvement included:

- Overall comfort with process
- Knowledge of law
- Specific strategies for improving the conduct of conferences
Recommended Practices

• Careful review of the Student Code of Conduct
  – Achieved: page by page review

• Simulated sessions and shadowing
  – Achieved: case study & limited shadowing

• Tag teaming the first few cases, then periodically “reteaming” on larger or more complicated cases
  – Achieved: new ELCO’s tag-teamed

• Conversation and sanction coaching
  – Achieved: individually and at group res life meetings
Recommended Practices

• Provide tools to ensure smooth delivery, including a “checklist” to support confident preparation and suggested standard sanctions
  – Achieved: review of standard sanctions; checklist under construction

• Devote a significant amount of time to “why?”
  – Achieved: ongoing... ambiguity continues of course

• Participate in organizations like ASCA
  – Achieved: Ashlyn was a first time attendee!
Recommended Practices

• Avoid relying on conduct management software to train ELCOs on the process and procedure (Conduct does not always follow a linear process!)
  – Achieved: specific COCO questions still arise

• Remember to frame the conduct process by stressing “we are safeguarding the student, safeguarding others, and safeguarding the institution”
  – Achieved: hosted discussion focused on private v. public institutions
EXAMPLE TRAINING ACTIVITY: Transferable Skills

Academic Advising
Career Development
Greek Life
Leadership
Health & Wellness Services
International Student Services & Study Abroad
Residence Life
Student Activities / Engagement
Religious Services
Student Athlete Services
EXAMPLE TRAINING ACTIVITY: What is the Craziest ...

- Thing a student has shared with you in a conduct meeting?
- Thing you have said to a student in a conduct meeting?
- Excuse you’ve ever heard from inappropriate behavior?
- Technique for making a student feel comfortable in a conduct meeting?
STATION BREAK

IDIocy

Never Underestimate the Power of Stupid People in Large Groups.
Assessment is continuous!
# Training Topics

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>FACILITATOR</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Beginning of Training</strong></td>
<td><em>Administer Pre-Test</em></td>
<td>Lindsay</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Sept 2-6</strong></td>
<td>Conduct Meeting Specifics (Location / Words to Choose / Your Personal Style / Personal Conduct Philosophy)</td>
<td>All</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Sept 16-20</strong></td>
<td>Conduct Meeting Simulation / Case Study</td>
<td>Lindsay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sept 30-Oct 4</strong></td>
<td>Conduct Resource Review (CAS Standards, ACSC, etc.) &amp; Private v. Public Institutions</td>
<td>Cameron</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Oct 14-18</strong></td>
<td>Spotlight on Sanctions (Selecting Sanctions Specifically Focused on Learning Outcomes)</td>
<td>Zeno</td>
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<td><strong>Oct 28-Nov 1</strong></td>
<td>The Ethics of Conduct (Your Personal Biases and Struggles)</td>
<td>Cameron</td>
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<td><em>Administer Post-Test #1 (hopefully following completion of at least one observation / mtg)</em></td>
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<td><strong>Nov 11-15</strong></td>
<td>Discussion on Restorative Justice</td>
<td>Cameron</td>
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<td><strong>Nov 25-27</strong></td>
<td>Crisis Management Review</td>
<td>Rhodes</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Dec 9-13</strong></td>
<td>Current Topics in Higher Ed Law</td>
<td>Cameron</td>
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ELCO Involvement

• Directly involved in development of Conduct Coordinator Checklist
• Assisted with presentation of various topics / lead conversation on topics of specific knowledge
• Opportunity to serve as a research assistant
Findings (2013-2014)*

• **Process** (1 = Low 7 = High)
  – Knowledge and comfort pre-training: 4.5
  – Knowledge and comfort post-training: 5.0
  – Knowledge and comfort after first case: 5.0
  – **Increased... then maintained!!!** (overall higher)

• **Policy** (1 = Low 7 = High)
  – Knowledge pre-training: 5.3
  – Knowledge post-training: 5.6
  – Knowledge after first case: 5.8
  – **Increased... and increased again!!!** (overall higher)

*Mostly second year ELCO’s*
Outcomes (2013-2014)

We excelled in:

- Knowledge of laws, Code of Conduct, the ICF process, ensuring confidentiality, COCO, and confidence in conducting the Conduct Conference

Areas of improvement included:

- Overall comfort level
- Knowledge of sanctions

*Overall... ELCO’s reported feeling welcome to engage in conversations and problem solve options even though specific problematic issues still surfaced!*
Feedback (2013-2014)

- Policy questions included: basic alcohol sanctions, noise violations, HIPAA, confidentiality, support from administration, safe practice space, institutional policies, mandatory sanctions, flow chart of the process / potential sanctions for policy violations

- Procedure questions included: COCO training, professionalism with a student, Code of Conduct, facilitating a meaningful Conduct Conference, mock conferences, checklist, sanction tiers
YEAR THREE

• Opportunity to train four first year ELCO’s
• Bring a new research assistant on board
• Continue to adapt training to fit evolving needs
• Roll out the finalized Conduct Process Checklist
• Prepare for August training, capitalizing on the experience of second year graduate students
• Enhance August ELCO training (update topics, add additional simulation activities, enlist another second year to assist with training)
• Do not let individuals select their own “identifier”